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NOTES AND COMMENTS

ON

SCRIPTURE.

FROM THE NOTE BOOKS OF

J. N. DARBY.

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Τὸ δὲ ῥῆμα Κυρίου μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

I Peter i. 25.

VOL. VI.

BATH:
P. A. HUMPHERY, 11, MARLBOROUGH, BUILDINGS.
1897.

PRINTED AT THE HERALD OFFICE, BATH.

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—28. The Lord answers the question now proposed, "Lo, we have left all and followed Thee, what shall we have?" "There is no man who has left house," &c. "on account of me, and on account of the Gospel, that shall not receive an hundredfold" in kind even (the Lord in this omits "wife;" there is no promise to give him back this—this stands on other and its own ground) in all the comforts and kindness, and peace, and enjoyments which belong to Christians as such here, with persecutions as from the world, and in the age to come eternal life. Yet there is no mere human standard of purchase as it were, or recompense. There are many who seem to take the lead, and do externally, who shall be last, and last apparently for a time who shall be first. The expression "mothers" shows that it is not in a mere natural sense, yet it is, in the counterpart, enjoyment of actual present things, finding in the Church what really fills the gap an hundredfold, made by these breaches. But, though in love to Christ and the Church, there may be infinitely more than an hundredfold for sacrificing wife, yet that is never made up in counterpart. There is not that made up in the actual enjoyments of the heart in the sources of happiness around, that may perhaps make the sacrifice more blessed, because Christ alone can make it up, but the other thing is not, though that may be more than verified. But in all other things, though with persecution, there is a positive more than making good in all that draws out, and fills up, and satisfies, and enlarges the affections in the relations with all around, besides the world to come, which seals it all with blessing and joy. "But there are first," &c. This encouragement was graciously given to us all, when the effect of the Gospel was stated, and brought to light

indeed in the rejection of the Saviour. Such was the portion of the Saviour. He had now fully brought it out, and indeed they had seen how He had been treated and rejected at the seat of the nation's judgment and authority. He had also put it before them, and hence pressing on them the way He was to be treated, and what position He stood in towards the nation, and how He was rejected indeed, and what man was, shewn too in Elias.

—30. Does not this imply, as other passages, that Christianity is not an αἰὼν (age)? For "the world to come" is, I apprehend, the millennial state.

—32. "And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem," where His glory was to be cast down to the ground; "And Jesus was going before them," conducting them there; "And they were astonished," how He could lead them thus on to the very destruction He had declared; "And they, following, were afraid." This very courage which led straight on to predicted oppression and disaster, frightened and terrified them; it is its natural consequence, for the flesh shrinks from what is so inconsistent and contrary to its natural feelings. There is something that terrifies nature, because it is what we call unnatural, and to see One in our nature do it distresses us. But the Lord led calmly and peaceably straight on. He knew why, and where, and to what end He was going, and, in patient determination of love and obedience, steadfastly set His face to go there. The Lord, seeing their terror, knowing their condition, speaks openly to them of it all—does not leave them in their affright, but calmly explains all that was coming. His soul was at peace, and able to care, and caring for them, and relieve them by talking to them of it

as a clear and settled purpose. And the explanation was clearer, and fuller, and more intimate than before. Before this it had a character just relative to the position they stood in, to the character in which He had just been revealed, as for example, the Transfiguration. But now it was the full detail, on the guilt of the nation, not merely the fact as regarded His glory, but their conduct ; this might be now openly exposed, for they had now really rejected Him, and the Apostles felt their position as to this, and therefore it was right to explain it all to them as it stood in the knowledge of the Lord's mind. "Taking the Twelve again to Him, He began to tell them the things that were about to happen to Him—that, lo, we go up to Jerusalem." This was what was the source of their fright, when they were silently following Him in the way. This, says the Lord, is my account of the matter. "Lo, we do go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and scribes"—all this is coming—"And they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles. And they shall mock Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall spit upon Him"—treat Him with every possible indignity—"and they shall kill Him ; and after three days He shall rise again." The whole case was now before them, thoroughly weighed by and known to the Lord. Jews and Gentiles were alike to take their own appropriate evil in the dreadful act of man's accomplished rejection of Him, already true in spirit. And the third day He was to show His victory over all the evil they were instruments of. Everything was perfectly weighed. He calmly surveyed, set about, and could communicate it all. Such was the Divine counsel. Resurrection was the grand

remedy and power of blessing. All the now proved evil had not escaped God's eye. This was the course to be taken. It was most important too, as laying the foundation of their faith and understanding, when He did rise from the dead. Nothing could be plainer, calmer, and more apposite, or more in facts needful to be communicated. Just a sentence upon all that was in man, in every character, Jew or Gentile, religious, or in power.

—35. Note the terms of this request, as a warning as to the frame of man's spirit "We would" (θέλομεν, will). There was no faith in this, though perhaps it was formed on what they had verbally heard of the limits of faith; it was strange request. But let us judge ourselves in spirit, not making the Lord and His glory mere servant to our will and unholy presumption. Let us also learn not to judge others. "He that seeketh His glory that sent Him, the same is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him."

The evil, even of the saint's nature, had yet to be manifested in relation to His position in glory, when owned even, which passed by all the solemn and affecting truths just that moment presented, and which ought to have changed, could mere truths and facts do it, the whole position of the human heart. It was really the discovery of its irreparable badness, even when there was an acknowledgment of the glory, the humiliation, and the deep grace in it; and the ruin of man, of themselves, it disclosed, was entirely unfelt and unentered into—took no effect whatever on their heart; they were totally dark and blind to it. Man's heart is so. It must be partakers of them by the Holy Ghost to know them. It is a true portion of the saints that, if we keep the Lord's words, we may ask what

we will, and it shall be done unto us. But here was the seeking their own exaltation in His glory, and that in the very face of the testimony of His humiliation. There was the appearance of faith, for it assumed His glory, and that He would be exalted, though He was just speaking of His humiliation. They say that whatever they ask He should do it. This is just the form of faith and promise; yet it was the pure spirit of self-exaltation, re-proved, and the very contrary to the Spirit of Christ. It did not enter into His humiliation, nor was really identified with Him, and sought its own glory, assuming, as we have said, withal the character of faith in His glory, flattering the Lord (had He been susceptible of anything of the kind) at the moment of His trial—a work really of Satan from beginning to end; and the form which the spirit of the world or self-exaltation takes in the saint under a spiritual giver—a suitable occasion for the flesh to make such a request, but the greatest, real insensibility. The Lord however, in the patience of grace, His own soul now dwelling on what He was going to pass through, still presses this: "Ye know not what ye ask." And the deep self-humiliation, or rather the taking and keeping as His, the low place in which for our sakes, in the manifestation of the Divine Glory, He had set Himself.

—38. "Ye do not know what ye ask." Note the way to the Lord's glory necessarily. The snare, to our evil hearts, would have been to have taken the occasion to show that though humbled, we had a real title to glory; that it was all voluntary, our own doing, carrying the love of it in our hearts, though we might have relinquished it. But He, whose glory really was what He did, He did in

perfectness. What we give up is false, though He may accept the sacrifice. What He laid by was true, and He humbled Himself truly; He had a cup to give them to drink—at least He could lead them to the drinking it, He could lead them to this consequence, and tell them they would have that. But He professed no conferring of favours in His Kingdom. All moral perfectness He had, and this the rather from this very position, for what is true claims not itself outwardly thus—that is, of the world. He came as His Father's Servant, and that place He perfectly held. "To sit on my right hand and my left, is not mine to give, but to those for whom it is prepared." I am a Minister of accomplishing a given work. I can lead you in the renunciation of all things of life. I have a cup to drink, and you shall drink of this cup of self-sacrifice and death. But it is in the spirit of perfect submission and nothingness, that the Father, and He only, may be perfectly glorified. Nothing could exceed the admirable perfectness of this reply, not in mere statement of principles, but in the blessed silent (yet far more eloquent) expression of it in His own conduct. I know not a more beautiful expression of our Lord's perfectness in humiliation, and abstract perfection in the place He had taken in which alone God could be perfectly glorified. How different from "Ye shall be as gods." As the first Adam exalted Himself to be as God, so the Second humbled Himself entirely (even to the death of the Cross) that God, in all His character, supremacy, and glory, might be completely, and finally, and altogether glorified. How fully He emptied Himself, and, just because Himself, never ceased to exist! Therefore the emptying was always absolutely perfect.

Then how blessed, as to the suffering, "The cup that I

drink, shall ye drink!" Oh, what a privilege to follow Jesus, let it be ever so feebly! And all through grace, and so only blessed too. Yet in that in which He exhibited His own Divine perfectness, not merely to follow but to be with Him in it—for we are not speaking of atonement here, but of suffering in it, not the cause or effect of the cup, but of His Spirit in drinking it, in which we have the privilege, according to our measure, of the sufferings of Christ abounding in us. Glorious privilege! And filling up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ, for His Body's sake, the Church, and having all, in the certainty of His love, to His glory, and the Father's in it, knowing it is of grace in us, in Him of His will. Yet, in the perfect subjection of that will, suffering in the flesh. "For he that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sin," whereas the exercise of the will of the flesh is always sin; the subjection of it in suffering for God always righteousness, and, in Christ, being by His will intrinsic righteousness, in us conferred grace; compare Ps. xl. Through the truth, looking at this in communion as an object, we are sanctified.

In these thoughts of the flesh in the two brethren, we have first their own will which Christ did not take, and then their assertion of their own power to go through all He had to accomplish or pass through. This is drawn out by the expression of the Lord in the now consciousness of His approaching sorrow, for He was rejected: "Are ye able to drink the cup," &c., "and be baptised with the baptism" of death in all its weight of suffering, to rise again? They, equalling themselves with Him, say: "We are able." The Lord, in His wondrous grace, equals them with Him by grace. He does

not say: "Ye are indeed able," but "Ye shall indeed drink." As we have said, "Ye shall indeed suffer with me;" the reward of glory I leave to the appointment of the Father—it is not mine to give, but to whom it is prepared. The indignation of the ten was, if not so deliberate, not much less the flesh than the wish of the two. It was founded on the same feeling of being first or last. The Lord therefore calls them all, and reminds them this was a Gentile practice, the spirit of the world. It had, in a sense, been forbidden, even among earthly Israel. But here all was contrary, "Whosoever would be great" "among them should be" their "servant." They were a people quite separate, separated by the gulf of death and the Cross from the world; to be great there was out of question, but among them it was to be all different. "He who would be great should be their servant." And in very deed so it is; the lowest is the first in Christianity. Whoever wished to be first should be servant of all. It fulfils itself in the dispensations of God; for this indeed was the very errand of the Son, to come and act on His own principles— of love—in the midst of the world, and not to mix Himself with it, and fall in with its ways. He came in the power, and new principle of love, "to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." He it was they were to follow. Nothing could be simpler, for they were quite a separate people. The darkest sense of need was more to the purpose, in calling out the true and unfailing power of Christ, never failing and never wearied by man's wretchedness, in the effecting the works of Divine mercy. And if the Lord came that they which saw might be made blind, He came that they which saw not might see. This poor

blind man, in the sense of need, cries for mercy, owning Jesus honestly as the Son of David, less apparent faith than those who spoke of His glory that they might have it for themselves—grace, the grace of the Lord had prepared this man's soul for this occasion, and now the occasion occurred, for God works where we know not. But he was seeking the supply of his wants in the acknowledgment of Jesus' glory. The world rebuked him, but he was in earnest, he wanted the blessing, and he sought it. This man knew what he asked for—the sense of our wants is true knowledge (in asking). On the cry: "Have mercy," Jesus at once stood, and proposed, to this cry of need, the very thing which He had reproved and set aside in the two brethren: "What wilt thou that I should do unto you?" So different are the same words in the mouth of unbelief, a carnal, sordid, selfish claim, and in grace. "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" And he received all he desired, and used it to follow Jesus. How different from using the plea of His glory, merely to exalt ourselves! Followed the Lord in simplicity, where the disciples were astonished, and followed trembling!

Jesus was now entering by this ancient port of Israel—the sign of God's favour, and the nation's refusal of judgment in its rebuilding—the door of hope to rebellious and apostate Israel. Here He is first acknowledged King, the Son of David, by the blind receiving, in the sense of their misery, sight from Him. The nation's dealing in respect of this title remains to be seen. This was the blind seeing, Israel's true restoration and hope; for who was blind as His servant, seeing many things and observing not? Here the Remnant followed Him—this poor blind man, the first herald of the King of mercy, the Son of David, Jesus.

—40. "To give; but" (save) "to those for whom it is prepared." For this use of ἀλλὰ (but, or save) see ch. ix. 8. What profound humiliation! To suffer all, but not to have, as it were, a place to give away in His Kingdom! And to avow it! But this is spiritual. He came to glorify His Father, and He was perfect. There is something exquisitely beautiful in all this in the life of Christ, and they are eternal principles.

—45. He sets the example—"to serve." There is glory in what follows. But what self-devotion it is not "to give," as it were, as rich, but "His life!" It was what He had to give for sin; but what a gift!

—48. We must look for rebukes in the exercise of faith. It seems to them troublesome and unreasonable; for why? They have not the same spiritual urgency, but true faith. "He cried much more." And the Lord will stop, though man would not; and their minds will be changed then, when they see the Lord has regard to the cry.

—51. Compare verse 35. This is ever the Lord's word to faith. I suppose faith ever runs parallel with the Lord's will, for faith has its operation in the power of that Kingdom which is the fulfilment of the Lord's will; when the request flows from our own will therefore, it cannot be the prayer of faith, and is a mere subjection of God and His counsels to our fallen wills. Accordingly, "We know that whatsoever we ask according to His will, He heareth us." And I am persuaded this knowledge of the Divine will and faith run proportionally. It is (not knowledge properly but) in fact the knowledge of faith, and where there is the enquiry of faith, short of the apprehension of the will of God, we pray in truth in implicit subjection to His will,

looking for that increase of the Spirit which shall enlighten us in power of conversation. Our personal necessities, however, may, even in this subjection to the Divine will, be brought before God ; when there is genuine trust in Him, we propose ourselves for mercy. The "What wilt thou" is God's part; the "We will" comes quite wrong from us, and marks want of trust or acknowledgment of the need first of mercy, and we generally, in such case, "know not what" we ask. And hereto the word of man, besides the willingness, applies "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst," and the Lord said : "I will, be thou." The point we should practically enquire into is, Is our will concerned, or is there simple hearted reliance upon the wisdom, and acknowledgment of the righteousness of the Divine counsels and will. If it be our will, we may judge it (and this includes our judgment) to be at variance with the Divine counsels, and injurious to our own peace, though it may, as the two disciples had, have a reference generally to, and seeking strong acknowledgment of the object of faith. However, there is a distinction between doing this in ignorance, and misled perhaps by others, as here, and wilfully as in the Jews in the wilderness. In the latter case, I conceive the object will be found ever present and personal, and to be real distrust, and love of present gratification.

But the exact coincidence of the language of the two disciples, and the Lord's subsequent promise, John xiv. 13, and xv. 7, connected too with our Lord's words in verse 3 leads us to the true source of this deeply interesting question. But the just weighing of the several passages in the Gospel of John, fully opens this comprehensive, and all-important truth to our souls.

—52. See the fruit, when the faith is genuine. The Jew, who recognized the Son of David so coming, received his sight, and followed Jesus to better, perhaps more sorrowful things, but in His triumph speedily in His time.

Chapter XI.

The whole scene, as regarded presenting Himself as the Object of their faith, was really now closed, and the Lord was now to present Himself in the claim of His royal character, and judicial Lordship in the Temple, and to have them all before Him, and to judge them in this capacity. His presenting Himself as a gracious witness was now closed, and He acts on the claim, and makes it good in the need of this manifestation, as before His willing subjection, though He could command all creation to meet the need, that subjection occasioned, of the didrachma. He sends two of His disciples, and takes the ass, "Whereon never man sat," for this royal and entitled Claimant of the throne of Israel to sit upon, "And if any say to you: Why do ye this?" They were to say simply: "The Lord hath need of it." "And straightway he would send it there." Thus knowing and ordering the distant heart, and manifesting how David's Lord had good claim to be David's Son, indeed to be received as such in the title of His own Person and glory, He who did these things by this Divine power and ordering was claiming surely in grace, and in no needless untruth, the place of David's Son. All was already subject to Him, to whatever He might subject Himself. This was over

several hearts, whoever they were, so that it was not merely knowledge of the owner, but control of their hearts; "and some of those who stood there."

The same Divine power was controlling the hearts of the disciples, and the multitude, to give this testimony to the royalty of Jesus, and accomplish the words of the Prophet. "They put their garments upon it, and He sat on it." A new position of the lowly Jesus—yet lovely even in this. "And many strewed their garments on the way." "And they that preceded," inspired to sing the same testimony of Israel, cried saying, as in Psalm cxviii. as Israel shall say in that day: "Hosanna! Blessed be He that cometh in the Name of the Lord. Blessed be the coming Kingdom of our father David." This was really the full language of waiting for the Kingdom, and acknowledging the Person of Messiah, and looking up to the heavens as the source of it, saying: "Save now in the highest." Thus was the full testimony given to the Son of David, the Lord Jesus, and the minds of the people, though in will to reject Him, overruled to honour Him with the fullest testimony to the claim in which He came for their own blessing. This must have been before He was rejected.

—8, 9. What glorious disposition of hearts! It was as Lord only He had anything here thus to dispose of.

—10. "The coming Kingdom." It is manifest that the Lord dispensatorily proposed Himself to the Jews, though He opposed their thoughts concerning it, declaring that a man must be born again before he could see it. To Pilate He clearly avowed His being so; to the Jews He avowed His Person, not His claim.

—11. How calm and full of heavenly dignity is the

Lord's way now! Hated, despised, rejected, and soon to be treated with unresisted scorn and death. The terror of God is now upon them all; and He enters into the city thus in public and unhindered testimony to His Messiahship. His dignity from God, and indeed with the stamp of what was properly Divine upon it—thus come, He enters into Jerusalem, and goes on in royal dignity. He enters into the Temple. There is no hand raised, no tongue moves against Him; He, and He only is the great Object there. "And having looked round on all things, it being late, He went forth to Bethany" again "with the twelve." The full testimony was given. The judgment was to be as calm as the dignity was manifested. For as He displayed God, had displayed the royal dignity of Him who was rejected, so now they were to be judged. This entrance of the Lord was a blessed testimony to His rejected character, and the hand of God astoundingly displayed in it, placing Him in the judgment place of the nation. He had now surveyed it all. He had long walked in grace as the least, and the last, that He might carry the grace to all, that He might suit it to their need, and meet, and sympathise with all their ruin in blessed grace. Blessed Master! But as far as they were concerned, to their shame and loss, He had "laboured in vain" and spent His "strength for nought," and in vain. And now, this having been exercised till they had rejected it fully, the more fully manifested it, yea, ascribed it to the enemy, though, that it might reach all, He after that still went on, now it was closed; and, in the dignity of His own Person and Messiahship, He was to call them up before Him in judgment. His way is clothed with unresisted and resistless Divine dignity, in doing this.

First, the weakness and darkness, and impotency of sin and malice shrink into their own place before the light of God beaming forth, that His death and suffering might be manifestly the willing exercise of His grace for them, not their power while Divine control and influence emanated from Him, and ordered all for it. Yet, so properly Divine was it that He never the least left the simplicity and humility of His character. It was Divine testimony to Him such as He always was (out of the mouths of babes, and sucklings even, perfecting praise, to still the enemy and avenger) He came in, and went out in His usual meekness with the twelve, whatever surrounded Him. But what controlling dignity! The Lord guide us, and make us estimate Him, that Blessed One.

—11. There are indicative circumstances in Mark, of the most striking character, as ch. ix. 15., x. 32, and here in this verse.

—13. The Lord, in His righteous dispensation, justly looked for fruit. Yet, in the fixed order of His ordinances, "it was not the time of figs." The power of the Lord's coming, as dispensatorily proposed, but in the knowledge of God, suspended during the times of the Gentiles, is key to much of the prophecies. It is that which drew forth the admiration of Paul; as touching the Gospel they are enemies, as touching the election they are beloved.

The Lord returned to Bethany, and, on the morrow, going forth from Bethany, He hungered, for the Lord indeed was subject to all our infirmities—He took them—but so all this was ordered. So the Lord looks for food in that which He has created and planted. He has not created it for no delight to Himself, nor planted it to find

no food nor fruit. But, alas! Jehovah could find no food but the offering. Yet, on the other hand, blessed is that, but He did in His own delight and love look for, that He might have complacency and delight in it—fruit in the place and vineyard of His planting. But, alas! when He looked close, how different! There was none; it had leaves, and looked fair at a distance, but had leaves only —"The time of figs was not." The Lord pronounced final judgment upon it; no fruit was to grow on it for ever. And so it was strictly with the Jewish people; as standing as they did under the old covenant, they were hopelessly condemned, they never will be recognised, nor bear fruit ever. The old covenant was not the time of fruit. When grace receives them under the new, Israel shall blossom, and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit, but on this, where it stood in the obedience of man, it never would. It had been indeed fully tried; the fact merely, however, here is pronounced. The application, the Lord's search for good, found no refreshment, or answer there. His answer was in righteous judgment—a judgment utterly fulfilled.

And they came to Jerusalem, and He enters then into the Temple. Yesterday, the full survey of their condition, and the condition of His Father's, Jehovah's house, had been made, and to-day judgment is to be executed with all the authority, the condemning authority of Jehovah's King, bearing with none of this evil now. Long had grace been patient. He had retired to a distance, to give time for repentance. He being thus manifested (in the way with them) and after John's warnings, but now, this past, with all righteous authority and indignation, at head-quarters, there

was no more but to get rid of them. What authority in the righteousness of God! "He began to cast out them that sold and bought in the Temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves." This den of thieves! And in Jehovah's house! How free from idolatry! How full of sin! He would sanctify it. He suffered no man to pass through, to carry anything through the Temple, making it just a passage for his convenience. He maintained the holiness of God's house, and while He maintained its holiness as Jehovah's house, not the mere convenience of Jewish pride, as Jehovah's house, His Father's house, it had all its wide claim and value in His eyes—a house of prayer for all nations. The holiness of God's house gives it its extension, because it makes it properly God's house, and His claim is over all, and it is a claim of grace. But, while the Lord does this, His judgment and charge on the Jewish people is distinct and conclusive: "Ye have made it a den of thieves." His word too is from Scripture, so that the truth and guilt was plain. It had the force of God's word to them. We have also to note that the title of God, and the moral charge always has its force in the subject it applies to; thus the passage of Isaiah has its accomplishment in the latter day, when the house shall be so as God's house. Yet the claim of God was at least from its utterance by the Prophet. Yet it was then, after all, judgment, when sin had made it impossible (for all tended to the blessed end when Christ shall be there) and the charge was made in Jeremiah's time actually, but as it hung over their heads, so was it accomplished by their hands, and they are charged with it—they had done the thing, *i.e.*, He puts it as a question: Did not their conduct amount to their

considering it so? "Ye have made it a den of thieves." How plain, and bold, and unmoved in judgment is the Lord now, for He had taken the pronouncing of judgment in His own hand now. And the Lord applied the testimony of the Prophets now in judgment.

The Scribes and Pharisees hear it, only do what Satan does when he can do nought else—seek how he may destroy—for they were acting indeed his part now. They were afraid to act openly, but they sought to do it, or how they might, for they feared Him; the power of His word and ministry had swayed the multitude. They were astonished, if not converted, and, afraid of the effect of open action against Him as to their character before the people, they sought how. Thus Satan, by their love of importance and malice, had this thread of his train laid. All the awe and the power was with Him; no one still touched Him (and doubtless this an important seed for the Apostle's future work) when it was late He went out of the city. Thus this day closed in the Lord's manifested but holy, royal judgment, and their desired treachery of secret destruction, showing itself as in their hearts, for they were afraid of doing anything open, for the Lord had, in patient testimony, and real moral power, the upper hand in the glory of righteousness. For testimony now, and evidence of influence and power, produces not amendment or submission but, in their hopeless opposition, the desire to destroy Him, for they were really in the hands of Satan, as He the instrument of Jehovah's power and its wielder, though as yet it was only morally exhibited, or in human zeal and righteousness externally to them, so as still for responsibility, though in another way from the patient testimony of grace.

—15. Their recovery was out of question, this was their judgment. What power of righteousness over evil! Still, "Is it not written?"

—17. The remark may here be made that attention must be paid to the word "people" in the Scriptures, in order to our discernment of the mind of the Spirit in Scripture, as very often the word may represent things which are specially contrasted—the people (λαὸς) and the Gentiles (ἐθνῶν).

Verses 33 and 34 of the preceding chapter are exceedingly strong as to that which concerned the rejection of Christ. "We go up to Jerusalem." There was the place of God's delight amongst men in blessing, in favour, in Divine government on earth, the centre of all connection of God with man upon earth, and the Son of man, the great Centre and Link of it; His presence, after the patient grace of which we have spoken, was the test then of the condition of man and his whole estate. In Judas, man, left to his own way, was shown how, by lust and love of the world Satan had created in money, under the power of Satan in desperate and sad wickedness; looked at as left to himself, it had been good for him had he not been born. The companion and familiar friend of all the blessed manifestation of grace in Christ—his Introducer in holy familiarity into the house of God—he betrays Him, as the wretched, possessed instrument of Satan (yet by his own depraved lust) to the very priests of God, that they might disclose their state by delivering the King of Israel to the Gentiles; and they show their condition, and the condition of the world in their head exercising authority over God's King to reject Him under the title of Head of His own nation,

and that at Jerusalem, "For it could not be that a Prophet perish away from Jerusalem." But such is the picture exhibited in this statement of the Lord. For, though Christ came abstractedly as the Head of human nature, the Head and Crown of human blessing, yet it was not only blessing, but restorative blessing, if man had been capable of restoration. Thus the character of gracious interference, if man had not been hopeless as to condition, as well as sinful, for the close of all restorative process on responsibility came in in Christ. The law was the perfect direction of man on earth, now at sea through ignorance, and Christ of His pains in taking him up in this condition to remedy evil, and crown the good according to it—made of a woman, the first point, *i.e.* as Man; made under the law, the second; but even the grace which did it was manifested externally in vain.

In the morning there was the witness of God's judgment of the fruitless fig tree. This was a solemn judgment, really on the Jewish fruitless stock. But as the Lord turned His washing the disciples' feet to a present practical purpose, besides the type, so here to a lesson of how to enter into the power of this: "Have faith in God." Such is the great secret—to draw all our thoughts up to Him, and to judge with Him, and act for, and solely from Him (through faith); and there in the accomplishment of His purpose in His power, for there, by its mysterious yet simple connection with the interests of Christ, and the purpose of God, faith introduces us. He does not say here: Faith in the Father, or, Faith in salvation by the Son; it is not of this He speaks properly, though this may be connected with the confidence, and leads in the way of faith, and, save interests with Christ, in understanding. Yet in exercise, it is simply

"faith in God." The Holy Spirit, having set us in the ways of God, the place of separate service to Him, in the presence and midst of evil, relies on His intervention for the accomplishment of His own glory in Christ. And we see that this must be, we have faith in God, not in the stability of present things, not in the strength in which they stood before as impenetrable to the truth, but drawn up to God and centred in Him, separated to Him, acting, as it were, for Him and in His name, but in entire dependence, for this is always and specially in faith. It is the present dependence in the highest exercise of its power, the most so, yet therein does all, and for that reason. This faith is the working of the Spirit in us, in all the ways and purposes of God, but it shows itself in simple dependence, because it is the concentration of the soul upon Him.

Here was the simple exercise of faith: "Say to this mountain, Be lifted up, and cast into the sea, and doubt not in his heart, but believe that what he says is," it shall be to him. I believe, as I noticed I suppose in Matthew, that there is allusion to all the power and stability of the Jewish polity, even as then, the nation, not only the Remnant or moral state, whence fruit was looked. Note, when judgment against any further fruit bearing is pronounced, the tree withers; *quod nota.* But this accomplishment is whatever He says, but we must take it simply; anything tentative is not this; the question of false miracles does not here intervene. The next case supposes not the positive, active exercise of faith, but whatever they need, and are asking at God's hand which is now supposed. Then let them believe that they receive it, and it shall be to them. Next, when they are praying, they are under

judgment to God in this nearness, if they forgive not. Their souls must be in the frame of the Spirit of Christ; it is not supplication in the Spirit else; clearly they cannot ask in grace with unforgiveness in their hearts—they are not in the way of efficacious request in the Spirit. How far from visiting evil for evil was Christ in His dealings with His rebellious and unhappy people! "Father, forgive them" was His word; His judgment therefore came with all the power of God. This was, on this head, the Lord's manner of putting His disciples in His place, in the exercise of faith in the power of God towards them, and the manner and spirit of it. God would be with them in everything. They had only to have faith in God. Man had been fully proved. They had to cast themselves entirely upon God, and they would find what God was—powerful, faithful, and answering them, as always for and with them, to vindicate His truth with them. It was in mercy forgiving, not man in righteousness of his own with Him. What occasion had the Lord to tell them all this—that faith in God was the only resource; man was no avail! But what perfectness at such a time to say this, when every circumstance was the most opposite to God's appearance in His favour that possibly could be! Now is the time when He assures them, ask what they would, having faith in God and it would be to them. How willingly did He offer Himself! How opposite to the witness of such certainty, were the circumstances! And yet really, how easily could He have had twelve legions of Angels! But how then should the word be fulfilled? Here, moreover, it was the faith of service, and position towards God, not the children asking of the Father. And faith in God, after all, only

trusts in God's almighty power ; but it implies His perfect interest in His children ; but this is acted in the power of, not thought of as an object. His children, as such, do trust, not that they are children, but in Him.

They came again to Jerusalem, for this conversation was by the way, as to their portion as standing alone as it were, as separated to God, as the figtree's withering had happened within the knowledge of the disciples only ; and the Lord stands now before His unsubdued and unrelenting people, having been vindicated, with none of the awe of the previous day's circumstances, but in the simplicity of His own glory in humiliation, for His heart was never changed in it at all, with His disciples. The true and highest glory He receives, exhibits the testimony, and returns to His course of patient, but now judicial, and fast-closing service ; His character still the same, its effect by His grace more terrible on its rejecters. He was walking about in the Temple, subject to every question, and all their thoughts of Him humbled, whatever evidence He had given of power. The chief priests, scribes, and elders, recovered in a measure from their stupor on His entry into Jerusalem, question Him by what authority He does these things, still under a certain awe—the effect of what they had seen, and respecting Him more from the manifest influence on the people. Who gave Him this authority ? But the Lord now no longer answers enquiries, not the desire of faith to learn, but the self-judging question that they knew not, owned not Him, after all, whom God and, for the moment, man also owned. It was the restless effort to get rid of the pressure of facts on their own conscience, but indeed Divinely

ordered to their judgment. The Lord's answer no longer, as we said, explaining what was onward in mercy, throws them back upon the first testimony connected with His Person, judging them in the first onset before their conscience was hardened; yet therein their judgment now more terrible. "The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?" Answer this! It was throwing them on what was plain to their consciences as a test, what all the people, unprejudiced by interest, to whom they leaned for influence, believed, even if not receiving Christ. A terrible, but Divinely profound question! Yet so simple! Own this, they owned Christ; disown it, they condemned themselves before all, for indeed He was now the Judge. How terrible is the spiritual discernment of righteousness to plain points of conscience! And how it baffles human wisdom and plans! But what a wretched condition really were these rulers in! With all their importance and religious influence, obliged to deny the lowest testimony of God's truth, or condemn themselves; and avowing they did not believe on him whom they were afraid to deny, and afraid to deny him whose testimony plainly condemned themselves, so that their answer brought them into still lower degradation morally really, and to save their position, confessedly in ignorance, and incompetency to determine on the alleged pretensions of religious teachers. But really it was, on the face of it, hypocrisy. It was a perpetual silencer on all their religious pretensions; they were judged, not judges now. There was Divine wisdom in the enquiry, for it put the Jews first, and owned ministry presented as a test of their competency to judge, or honesty in owning; their consciences, and state were all judged by it. Thus

the three classes of rulers, priestly, governing, and teaching, stood all incompetent, rejected, and, as mere individuals, not able to discern and receive the testimony of God which all the people even acknowledged. They were judged, completely judged. The Lord declined replying to such, or submitting His authority to them. He was there—left them to their own course, and they stood incompetent and self-condemned. Then the Lord began to teach them in judgment.

—23. I believe this also had typical reference and accomplishment, though that be not all; but a great truth is in it besides.

—24. But there it is as walking in the power of the Kingdom. The Spirit distributes to every man, severally, as He will. Yet this word is true; yet must we wait on the Lord's mind, and so the believer will.

—28. This was a humiliating question to themselves, for He did and had done the things blessedly, and they could not help it.

—31—33. There is a deeper hardness of men than we are aware of.

Chapter XII.

1—11. How beautiful to see the feeling yet calmness with which the Lord speaks of His mission and rejection, in the parable of the husbandmen!

The Lord does not at all address them here on the ground of His service in grace, which had been rejected

and closed at His entry into Jerusalem. It was no explanation to His disciples or the multitude, that a Sower went forth to sow—the ministration of grace, fresh sowing on confessedly fruitless ground, a new work of grace which the Lord was really carrying on, but as One who came, after other messengers, to seek fruit on what was already planted. And this of course was the judgment of that people, though long patience had been, and was still shown before the judgment was executed. The judgment here was clear, plain, and solemn, addressed plainly to their consciences, including, for the whole scene was looked at, and declared His own rejection. In plain testimony by the word, His word—for He was still externally in such form of humiliation—yet faith sees the full and clear character of patient and true, according to the truth of God, yet Divine judgment, the human rightness and suitedness to situation, yet Divine dignity and power in the truth. Everything had been done for the Vineyard that could be done. It was, alas! an old story this, but it had been put responsibly into the hands of the husbandmen, and the rightful Owner left it thus in their hands. He who had ordered it, and settled it all at Sinai, and under Joshua, had left it, with warnings too, in the responsibility of the rulers and people to keep up, and dress, and order. He sent His servant in season, that He might receive of the fruit of the Vineyard, and they beat him, and sent him away empty. We have two things here—the Jews, specially the husbandmen among them, in their responsibility, not God in His own sovereign grace; every thing however put in perfect order into their hands in arrangement, blessing, and security, and, further, the patience of God's dealings,

sending messenger after messenger, doing every thing while possibility remained, till they had rejected and cast out His own Son. The whole ministry of Prophets was there—a ministry of patience with man (whom God had hedged about—but) in his responsibility, and Christ's coming, supremely so. The Sower's grace, as we have said, is quite distinct. This mission of His Son was last to them in this their responsibility. There was further here the distinct charge that they recognized Him as the Heir, as He was, and in their responsibility, and in such must be left to themselves, only with every external advantage afforded, had sought to get the inheritance for themselves by the destruction of the Heir. But the abuse and rebellion of their responsibility did not take it away, but drew on the judgment when all patience in instrumentality was exhausted. There was a Lord of the Vineyard—who had surrendered none of His rights, and if He had sent His Son in His great love to them, and in the glory of His own patience, would not leave Him unvindicated. They wished to have the Vineyard and all appertaining to it on their own right, in rebellion. It was not merely want of fruit, but active revolt against God's own title, and setting up for themselves against Him, and this in direct question between His Son and them—Him who was appointed Heir of all things. Such was the position of man's will, when the greatest exercise of patient favour put the Holy, Beloved One of God within the reach of their malice. But the Lord of the Vineyard could only thereon resume His rights—come and destroy the labourers, and give the Vineyard to others. But it was not only an exhibition of the nature and will of man, which their

conscience must testify to the truth of, it was the revealed and foretold conduct of the people, especially of the builders. It was clearly their case. It was the Stone which the builders rejected, which was to become the Head of the corner. Did they set up to be builders—were they such? Such was the judgment of their own Scriptures on them. And this, too, was the Lord's doing. How opposite then were the builders to the Lord's mind! It would be marvellous in the eyes of the people in that day. The whole of Ps. cxviii. is of remarkable application here. The whole passage is a wonderful judgment on them, and by the use of that very Psalm on them, till that Hosanna be sung, and He becomes, in full sense, the Head of the corner, and the gates of righteousness are opened to Him, and a willing people shall sing that "His mercy" has indeed "endured for ever"—entering by what His supreme grace has wrought into this their morally, and long time actually desolate place, but now the gate of the Lord into which the righteous shall enter. How blessed, and excellent the ways which have purged the sin and evil, yet loved the people, and in full righteousness accomplished all the promises, vindicating His own glory and Name, and only the more exalting the despised Son! Yet in despisal, the witness of infinite grace! These men who ruled, but not of God, could do nothing; they felt they were judged, they disputed, they condemned, but they could do nothing. The hand of wisdom held them fast in their impotency. They would have laid hold on Him, but they feared the people. They knew that He had spoken this parable against them, and, leaving Him, they departed. They take judgment only in their questioning Him. He remains there, and

they have to leave Him, ashamed. In what dignified blessedness does the blessed Lord stand forth here in the testimony of what He was, before He gave Himself willingly up, *i.e.* how does the testimony shine forth in Him! They have to leave Him, completely judged and baffled. They send the Pharisees and Herodians that they might entangle Him in word. As they were baffled in the question of authority, they select certain of the Pharisees and Herodians, strict in their Jewish claims, and apostate in their recognition of the heathen world—all one, if they can entangle Him who came in grace—and they propose the question which tries just these two points. And as the scribes, elders, and chief priests questioned the authority of the King of Israel, and so judged themselves, so these laid bare the woes and sorrows of Israel, without feeling and remorse, in tempting, and to entangle the Blessed One, using their sin with Satan's malice to put down and silence all good and every hope. And they are left just where they were, in the confession of the sin and ruin they had brought themselves into; without more it was a sad and terrible leaving. The Lord has only to do this, and what is our fate? These poor creatures could afterwards, when it served a moment's object and madness, cry aloud in self judgment: "We have no King but Cæsar!" Their address was most, to our evil flesh, attractive, had that been in Him whom they tempted, for evil of heart ever in a bad way knows righteousness, and what is upright and good abstractedly, by a conscience bad by the opposite. "Thou art true, and carest for no man, for Thou lookest not on the person of man, but teachest the way of God in truth." How far was this from them! How well they knew the

good and its blessedness, by a bad conscience! Nothing, in one sense, knows it so strongly. But they were precise in their requisition of an answer, a categoric answer, letting out their evil in apparent simplicity. The Lord knew their hypocrisy, and called for the seal of their present condition, into which the same unbelief that rejected Him had brought them. He was now leaving them in it. They had rejected Him, and this was all they brought out. Often the saint, standing where his own place with God is rejected, has to answer by the admitted evil of another, *i.e.* when thus tempted—but this is different from the predominant energy and testimony of the Holy Ghost, for He was not to strive nor cry, and He had not, whatever the testimony to Him, left this character, nor would not, nor could not, till He was risen—but in deepest judgment this may often be. They gave, or rendered nothing really to God. The Lord left them now where they had brought themselves—under Cæsar. They had brought themselves into the place of ruin, refused the Deliverer—there they were left to pay to Cæsar with nothing of God.

—12. Evidently now question of judgment between the Jews and Christ, as two distinct parties. Still the whole is more moral than economic. The principles, eternal principles of the Church substituted for the economic principles of Moses, rather than its economy; as ch. x, 5, and verses 33 and 44 of this chapter.

—18. The Sadducees must have their day, for God had so appointed. It was that other form of Jewish worldly evil. They plead Moses—a clear and recognized authority from God. But there was a new world, of which they knew nothing, into which He was now entering. And before

Moses had given the commandment, of which they were proud, at all, God had given promises, and revealed Himself in a covenant relationship, and in blessings which the law could not and did not affect. It was all for this world, and to regulate what was fleshly and of the flesh. But they "knew not the Scriptures, nor the power of God." These are the two things needed; if we recognize and own not the power of God, we limit the operation and extent of the Scriptures to our own, and we are astray even in interpretation of them—this is a great, perhaps not an uncommon evil. From God the testimony comes, and He views things in His own light, as to these promises, and accomplishes His own thoughts by His own power. Leave this out, and we are shut up in the puny inferences, results, and measures of our own minds and strength. Here it rested on the very point, not of Jewish integrity, as with chief priests or Pharisees, but, which was the witness of Divine power, exactly in its predominance over all the results of what man was. And this was the foundation, and only could be, on the Fall; this, the result of all God's actings, in which He would be glorified, and it was in this that this Blessed One was declared to be the Son of God with power. But He answers them from the Book of Moses, in which they trusted not when it regulated their fleshly or national laws which their vanity took. It was not what Moses said to them (as a mere lawgiver, though of God) but what God said to Moses when laying the foundation of blessing and hope for the people, speaking therefore of Himself, and what He was in grace. How blessedly does the Lord turn to grace, where His own soul was refreshed and at home, from their cavils, in power, in perpetual remembrance of His people,

out of the depth and simplicity of His own fulness! God said to Moses: "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." Man might fail, evil acquire power over good, but God remained the God of His people in all the fulness of His promises in the immutability of His own purpose of love. He was not the God of the dead—that were folly, inanity, and impossibility—they were living people to inherit living promises—not a tittle of God's purposes touched, let the apparent course of events and death itself seem to mar all. His purpose remained, in His own security, what it was. How blessedly did this apply to the circumstances the Lord was in! The power of it He evinced in His resurrection, while the great principle of the change of dispensation, and the Divine glory was thus brought out. The Sadducees were not the rulers, but the heretics of the nation; they are therefore plainly judged in error, as contrary to the hope, not corrupters of the righteousness, though doubtless they were, of the then Jewish state. It is remarkable the Lord's reference to this great revelation of Himself by God, as the warrant of the doctrine of resurrection; it lay at the very basis of the association of Israel with God—the basis on which their unconditional promises rested—God's name for ever, His "memorial throughout all generations." It could be on no other ground with sinful man than resurrection. It flowed too, from the nature of things, in the nature of the living God. And the resurrection, the only recognized form and power of this continuous living as a separated spirit, was recognized in no way by them; it was not Abraham if that continued so.

—25. If I understand this argument of our Divine Redeemer, it includes this, that those who rise are as the

Angels in heaven, but God as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was God of the promises. But being the God of them, yet not the God of the dead, they being dead, He was the God of them in the resurrection, and this seems His statement, for He introduces God's being their God as a proof that they rise. I am by no means fully informed from Scripture on this subject as yet, but, in His declaration to Moses, He seems to be called thus in reference to the promises made to the fathers, and these promises our Lord therefore seems to make hang, as to their validity, on the resurrection, speaking of the personal interest of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in this declaration. It was in this view a fatal error, for it struck at the root of God's faithfulness to His promises. Indeed now we know that it is the very centre of all our hopes. We may remark the ground of their great error, ignorance of the Scriptures, and the power of God.

—30. "With all thy heart" (*καρδίας*); "with all thy strength" (*ἰσχύος*); come from, or however are used in the Septuagint, 2 Kings, xxiii, 25; *δυνάμεως* (power) is perhaps nearly equivalent in Deut: vi, 5, where also *διανοία* (mind) occurs.

—31. The comparison of the place, Lev. xix, 18, where this is found, with the parable, so called, of the good Samaritan, throws the strongest light on it; with which also compare the Sermon on the Mount.

But though, as regards the nation, the Lord might say: "Then have I laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought and in vain," yet still there was a work with the Lord; and His ministry here, as well as His Person, had its effect, and was owned. We speak not here of disciples who

were to be witnesses for the next dispensation, but those who, by the overruling hand of God, were called to own the force of its moral power, though among the rejecting nation. Still it gives us a glimpse into a class—how numerous we know not—not far from the Kingdom of God, who were in principles within morally right, though they had not received or seen the Kingdom, but who may have been reaped when the harvest was gathered of the Lord's sowing. But they were still within the Jewish sphere—not the separated ones. The Lord was the perfect Discerner and Teacher of truth for Israel, as well as the Prophet of the Kingdom that should come. The full display of the truth, of the foundations of their own law, was thus brought out extracted from it all, and presented to the conscience. The conscience of the Scribe owned the truth presented, but indeed he went further, for he saw the distinction between that and outward services; how to place the two, and the power of the Kingdom he might not know, but the moral difference of a heart aright, in the sight of God, from the mere economy he did understand. And it is a great point, the end of Judaism really, while all God's part in it was exalted and sanctioned in the highest way. It was an admirable termination to the judgment of Israel itself, and the Lord's ministry among them, sanctioning and exalting what God had given them in the law, out of their own mouths, a righteous Scribe's mouth. He, Jesus, had the truth and power of the law; they refused to accredit the righteousness which corrupted the forms, and made His Father's house a house of merchandise, in a word, while they had abused the forms. The nation, as between God and them, had been judged in their chiefs, from their unconscientious rejection of John on

to Himself who threw them back on that. Their external or national condition, as God's people in the earth, had been judged in this duty to render to Cæsar what belonged to Cæsar. God left them in their condition there—all of these, by plain important truths directly applicable to their condition in the wisdom of God. Then the Sadducees, in power as the nation—see Acts, when the truth became important and a revealed fact—as deniers of the hope of Israel, for that hope stood in resurrection, and a hope connected with the promises made to the fathers, and that revelation of God on which all their hope stood—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob. Here our Lord shines forth as the extractor of all the essence of the law, as God's righteousness in the midst of the apostasy, as well as Founder of other hopes, and so as to claim the conscience of their own Scribe, no follower of His. Indeed he seems to have been graciously attracted by the truth, for his mind rested on and repeated the points of the truth with pleasure, at any rate with forms, even though ordained. In doing this, the Lord sustained, too, what was eternal in the law, and passed into all dispensations, as before all, however the effect was produced. And, while He maintained what was excellent there, He carried all that was, and could enter into the dispensation of love, into it with Him in the power that established it in the strength of resurrection on the basis of love. Those that valued this might pass, and did, when power came with it, into the Kingdom, yea, to find it there, yea, there only, certainly not in Israel left empty of the Lord; and doubtless there were many that did. It all centred in truth in, and went with the Lord who was now leaving them. This part of the law was concentrated and

found in Him. He fulfilled the rest in His own Person in sacrifice. "No man after that durst ask Him any question."

The Lord, having silenced all His adversaries, now proceeded to show their ignorance, their unbelief in what regarded the excellency of His Person, the incompetency of these Scribes, and this publicly and openly, teaching in the Temple. "How say the Scribes that the Messiah is David's Son? For David himself said, speaking in the Holy Spirit: The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit on my right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. David himself calls Him Lord, and whence is He then His Son?" How blessedly, having taken out the essence and perfection of the law, and that in part from quite a hidden passage, does the Lord turn to that which constituted the change of dispensation, as regarded the Jewish people, providing for the excellency and righteousness of the Lord's Person—His transfer, on their rejection, and His leaving them, on the call of Jehovah, to the right hand of the Majesty on high! The precise applicability was perfect. The Scribes had nothing to understand it with; but a great multitude, given liberty of heart and graciousness of subduing truth from the tyranny of scribe-like reasoning and dogmas, heard Him gladly. There was the sway and influence of moral blessedness and care for them. Often, where there is power and grace in some sort, we see this. Nothing was answered Him. He was there before them all in the Temple, but His majesty, and the majesty of truth kept them in check and in awe; they were afraid of Him, not He of them. He said to them in His doctrine: "Beware of the Scribes." But this warning is not for ignorance, though

their ignorance was manifested. The Lord always judges upon plain moral evil; they sought themselves, and were hypocrites; their judgment was short and plain. But the Lord lays His finger upon what all knew, but none would say; but He, the Judge (in the power of the word now), brings all the hypocrisy plainly into light; in the acts where their credit was their external honour, they should receive greater condemnation, for the pretences by which they sought to keep it up. I believe there was reference also here to the vanity of external service. It was a judgment of direct evil, in which the dispensation had closed in them; but it lifted up the veil on the character of the new. The best thing among them was hypocrisy; but God was indeed now looking upon what was real and internal.

—36. The matter of the discourse is merely stated here; in Matthew and Luke the particulars may be gathered.

—41. Here also the Lord is thinking and judging according to the Spirit of the Kingdom of heaven, where the spirit of the offerer solely was noticed in a Divine way, not the value of the offering with men externally, as in all that concerned the flesh, even before God, but now properly in His own intimate view of things, not the external and dispensed one. The Lord took pains to show them this, for this was addressed only to His disciples. It was a giving of self, her living; and the eye of God rested on it; the Lord noticed it. It was within all the eye of man noticed. But God was now bringing to light the glory and principle of these hidden things. God's "more" (πλεῖον) was different from all man's. It was morally more, as Abel's sacrifice which was "a more excellent sacrifice" (πλείονα θυσίαν.)

Chapter XIII.

This great principle and contrast is brought out in strong relief, and application to the hope and glory of Israel, in the passage that follows, for the sentence of Israel was now sealed. This one of the disciples rested on the outward form and power of the system. "What stones and what buildings?" The Lord at once gives their sentence: "Seest thou these great buildings? There shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down."

Nothing can be clearer than the Jewish character of this chapter. They were to be taken before councils and beaten in the synagogues; and then we get false Christs in the general history which began at the time. Then we get false Christs again after the specific epoch of the abomination of desolation. In the first case we know Christ is in heaven, but the desire for Him would be natural to Jews—a snare to Jewish Christians—for national deliverance; in the second case we shall be in heaven. In neither can there be application to the (Gentile) Church, as such. In Revelation, as in all prophecy, the Church is seen only in Christ; so the rapture in ch. xii., and the saints are seen in full distinctness in ch. xix. Only before the prophecy begins, their place in respect of the judgments is seen in ch. iv—kings on their thrones, though owning all glory to be the Creator's, the Almighty; in ch. v., priests.

—3. Sitting on the Mount of Olives—that place of judgment, departure, and return—looking over the loved but perverse and rejected city, these disciples, affected at what had been the centre of all their thoughts, being destroyed and made void, ask, "When shall these things be,

and what shall be the sign when all these things are going to be fulfilled?" The question here is presented to us by the Holy Spirit in a much simpler form, and affecting the setting aside of the Jewish resting place.

—4. It is to be remarked here that the question is only as to "these things," and it is to be remarked that below (verse 11) the presence of the Holy Ghost is spoken of, which is the case neither in Matthew nor Luke, which first attracted my attention here. Thus Mark, I apprehend, up to verse 14, speaks more of the then present time; nor does Mark say the end comes when the Gospel has been preached. In Matthew, the beginning of wars is also distinguished. In Luke the distinction is clearly made; Christ gives them a mouth there. But the destruction of Jerusalem is in view.

The first point the Lord noticed was the use Satan made of the rejection of Christ by the nation; many would arise: "saying, I am, and shall deceive many." They were to be aware of deception; next, the murmuring of the distant winds gathering the clouds for God's judgments, wars and rumours of wars. They were not to be troubled; they must be, but the end was not yet. For nation would rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there were to be earthquakes, famines, and troubles in different places; these were the beginnings of this world's throes for the bringing forth of judgment. All this however was to direct their progress and conduct in ministry, as the course of events went on. At the rumours they were not to be troubled. But there was another form of difficulty—they would be delivered up to councils, etc., and stand before kings "for a testimony to them; and the Gospel must first

be preached to all the nations." This would have that form of trial which arises from enmity—of the father against the son, etc.—in a word, which broke through the closest ties. Here the rule of their service was to be, they were not to premeditate; it would be given them the same hour. They would be "hated of all" for Christ's Name's sake, but whoever endured to the end, in spite of all this, would be saved. This is the statement of a general principle—endurance by the Divine power and grace. If it was on earth, and the end of the Jewish scene, the deliverance would be on earth. The point was, going on in patience till the Lord interfered. It runs then thus: "Lest anyone mislead you," "Be not disturbed," "Be not careful beforehand," "nor prepare;" all this was a matter of endurance to the end. This is the leading thought, what is to be guarded against and endurance. As to the time of this, it appears to me to be purposely general, giving the character and circumstances of the ministry, not a prophetic detail; only this, that it is connected with troubles apprehended by those conversant in Judæa or Israel, persons in the circumstances of the Lord's own disciples, the Lord gone, and His judgment not come. The whole period is embraced in one fact, here stated generally—the Gospel must first be preached to all the Gentiles. But this was in a measure, or rather in principle, true before the destruction of the Temple, so that it had its application coincidently with the Jewish part of the warnings. But the expression also opens it to the full fact, and thus leaves open the ministration which may take place at the close before the latter day destruction takes place. However the destruction is not the close of the ministry in the land, but another point which the Lord then notices.

—10. Here (unless abstractedly in principle, as in Col. i. 6) that which is spoken of is not the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus merely; that was not "the end." It is impossible not to see a wider scene in the Lord's thoughts.

The Lord, it appears to me, designedly uses here the term "the end" (τὸ τέλος). In His mind the true end was embraced, and in fact therefore, verse 10 swept over the whole period, or, at least, it was left open to it all, while all this served for direction to His disciples for their then emergencies, and the Gospel was, in a general sense, preached to all the Gentiles, before that took place which their thoughts rested on and were concerned in, having pretty nearly as great, in point of real power a greater extent than it has now. Then prophetically, though the fact of verse 10 is stated as a plain simple fact, the whole of what is said supposes, whatever may be done among the Gentiles, the subsistence of a state of things in Judæa such as the disciples were immediately concerned in, and the Jews there. Having given directions for their patient ministry, of which we have seen the extent, including coming before the Gentiles, the Lord then notices what concerns their position in the land—the immediate question. "When ye see the abomination of desolation standing where it ought not"—it was a matter for him that read to consider—then those that were in Judæa were to flee to the mountains. There might be many occupied in testimony in far countries, but those in Judæa were to flee. They were at once, without the least delay, to escape; the door was now closing (in judgment) on unhappy Israel; it was no time of testimony then. "Where it ought not"

(ὅπου οὐ δεῖ) I believe is purposely left open, as being instruction for ministry for what might happen to them, and when, in its stricter and fuller application, the abomination should be set up in the latter day. It was a time of sweeping and pure judgment; woe to the feeble and helpless woman! The people and place were given up to judgment and sorrow; they had refused mercy. The place of believers, in testimony, was to escape. It was matter of prayer, for the disciples, that their flight should not be in winter; for the ear of their Father and Lord was open to their cry for everything. How sweetly does this come in, in the midst of the terrible giving up to judgment! The Lord was not the least changed; His ear as calmly and as blessedly open to every one that sought, and cried, and believed; though He might be forced to give up a relentless people to relentless judgment, when they would have nothing else as the way of righteousness. He was still the same gracious, prayer-hearing God, nigh to them that called on Him, thinking even of the details of mercy for His people, and ready to make their necessary flight less painful and trying even for the flesh, but His warning easy to be acted upon.

—19. "For those days shall be distress, such as there has not been the like since the beginning of Creation which God created until now, and never shall be." Here the Lord's mind rests on the great accomplishment, and though there may be a partial anticipative fulfilment in that which Scripture does not notice historically—the capture of Jerusalem by the Romans, and those who were in that may have been providentially directed by it—the mind of the Spirit rests clearly on the great final catastrophe of God's house and people and city, that it may be purged by the Spirit of

judgment and burning, and the unclean not pass through her any more. It was a giving up to misery; the abomination of desolation brought it in. It might last in the hands of man so or so long—that may be learned perhaps elsewhere—but the days were "distress," and known so to the people at large. The disciples were forewarned, and had the sign of their commencement for fleeing, not then for testimony. If the Lord had not shortened those terrible days, no flesh should be saved. This is a remarkable term even to the evil of their own hearts, and the Spirit of death and evil is amongst them; they would destroy themselves, and so has been seen in Jerusalem, and even elsewhere. This from within and without; but, for the elects' sake who were to be spared after the flesh, these days were shortened. Still, though they be forewarned, and those who had understanding escaped, it is a general scene of confusion coming on the inhabiters of the land (or earth) which might reach all found there, unless God interposed to stop its actual career. As regards the heavenlies, this, in a certain sense, had been no matter, but for the earthly Remnant was all-important for its continuing existence. We have then the elect Remnant of those days especially noticed and brought into view: "For the elects' sake . . . He hath shortened those days. And then if anyone say to you," *i.e.* in this time of affliction recognized by all, for they were all in it, *i.e.*, the unbelievers. It was not then a subject of prophecy, but of actual trial: "If anyone say to you: Lo, here is Christ, or lo, there, believe it not." "There will arise," saith the Lord, "false Christs and false prophets." How blessed to have all these forewarnings! And doubtless there will be a Remnant

using them, and availing themselves of them in that day, for there will be the earthly things, when the others have had their course — not days of testimony now closed, but vengeance. These false Christs and prophets will give signs and wonders, so as, if it were possible, to deceive the very elect. God may keep them, but that is the only safeguard. For the elect here if fled (at least those of understanding receiving the testimony of Jesus as a Prophet, for the heavenly door is now, I presume, closed) from the place of vengeance, are still in the midst, morally at least, of the trials.

The hour of temptation which should come on all the world to try the dwellers upon earth, as Lot compared with Abraham, the heavenly man and family. "But," says the Lord, "do ye beware, lo, I have foretold you all things." For the Lord speaks here in the character of the Prophet of the Jewish Remnant, and so has to be received, not as the glorified Son of God, nor "Son of man who is in heaven;" for these necessarily the associations would be heavenly, not warning to flee and saving flesh; and "Whosoever will not hearken to" this Prophet (for this is as true of Christ as His being Son of God and all else) "shall be cut off from among His people." But in those days, after the tribulation of which the setting up the abomination of desolation was the leading sign to them for getting out of the way, every visible seat of power shall be cast down, and cease to guide and illuminate the world. "The powers which are in the heavens" offer a little difficulty to my mind. It is clear that the whole stability of governance will be shaken. That there may be a public witness in creation of the immense revolution, which is then taking place, is possible, as at the

Lord's death. Its general import is plain, not only that the affected earth, but the sources of power will be touched by the Divine hand and will; "I will shake not the earth only, but also the heavens." Satan is cast out at this time, but the principalities and powers in heavenly places cease to be the agents of Divine ministration, and shake under this great action that transfers it to the hands of the Son of man; for who can stand in the presence of this power, unmoved? The evil was cast out, but the creature could not stand unmoved in the presence and acting of His power. His assumption of it for the subjection and order of the world to come is not that "of this age," not only in respect of evil but also of the instruments of His power. And this change is a mighty one, and introduces the Son of man in His manifested glory in royalty. The casting down of Satan was by predominance in those regions, according to the character of subsisting power. Then, Michael, the Archangel fought, and the dragon fought, and his angels, and his place was not found; but this was a shaking of the whole ministration itself. "And then they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall He send forth His angels" (servants of the Son of man) the Angels of His power, not the messengers of His grace, to "gather His elect from the four winds, from end of earth to end of heaven." This seems to me to be purposely general, including the title of the place, in the power of which the Lord Jesus comes; comp. Ps. l. The fig tree, the habitual figurative representative of the Jewish people, would afford them the parable of this. When they saw the things He had spoken of, His coming in power, and the whole setting aside of the dispensation, was nigh at the

doors. The Jewish (unbelieving) "generation" would not "pass away till all these things take place;" heaven and earth would pass away, but not the despised Son of man's, for He now spoke in the dignity of power. But of that day and hour none but the Father knew. It was not a subject of revelation, for here the Lord acted as a Servant; the Kingdom was God's Kingdom; what He heard He spake. "Take heed, watch and pray, for ye know not when the time is." It appears to me this was addressed to them as within the Jewish scheme, though it may be true that we may watch, not knowing the day; but that is not exactly our position. It was a day looked for to overtake them here, when there would be trouble, and great affliction, however they might be preserved, not being caught up out of it all to meet the Lord. They were waiting here, with guidance how to pass through the difficulties, and dangers, and that connected with Jewish circumstances and Jewish habits. It was not at all the Holy Ghost's witness of a glorified Jesus, and union with Him to be accomplished in His presence, that where He is they may be. The Lord, however, turns back to the general principle and application of it to ministry. They were to go on thus acting while He was away, absent, "as a man gone out of the country," and this He said not to them only, but to all.

The thing of which the day is not known extends, it seems to me, however, withal to this change in the sources of dispensation, the revolution that takes place in the heavens, and this it is that affects the condition of the Remnant here (this Red Sea of heavenly matters) for the casting out of Satan makes their state much worse, for he comes down to earth. But this brings in the day of the Lord.

"Unto the Angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come whereof we speak," but to Man, in Jesus' Person, then accomplished; and here this revolution takes place.

—24. It is remarkable that neither here nor in Matthew, though announced at the first, and the occasion of the discourse, is there any hint of the (or a) destruction of Jerusalem. There is great tribulation, and then the coming of the Son of Man.

Note, in this chapter, the dispensational character is not nearly so defined and precise as in Matthew; thus, it is not, "This gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached . . . . . in all nations, and then shall the end come," (there is no question as to the end of the age) but we have in general, the Gospel must first be preached (comp. xvi., 15, 20), and, in a part connected with the general testimony, Matthew x., which goes from Christ till He comes again, as far as Palestine and the Jews are concerned. The end is not spoken of here; verse 24 too is much more general, not so precise, though the same event.

"After that distress;" "but in those days;" the sun put out before the Lord comes, *i.e.*, is seen. No question of the Church here, but of those in Judea; He gathers the elect after He comes. The troubles come before the day; Joel, compare Rev. vi. The Lord appears for the Jews against the nations; Zechariah. The deliverance is in Zion and Jerusalem; Joel. The sun is darkened before the day; Jerusalem is taken in the day. The lawless one is destroyed "by the appearing of His coming;" but that is only an incident.

It is manifest that Luke was given to write with more explicitness upon the times of this prophecy than Matthew

or Mark, whose accounts seem so worded as to bring it all very intelligibly within the destruction of the religious establishment and polity of the Jews, then of immediate and practical importance; as to the full import of it, I have still to receive it. In Luke xxi, verses 25, 26, seem fairly referible to what was after the destruction of Jerusalem, but I do not think I have ever found adequate importance attached to the dissolution of the economy of God's peculiar people—His first great dispensation—in fact, more important than the dissolution of the Gentile economy, though exceedingly parallel, save as that dissolution was attended by the re-admission of the Jews into the privileges of the Kingdom, and was life from the dead to the world. I should however have been freely disposed to refer this to the dissolution of the Gentile dispensation, were it not for Matthew's "immediately," ch. xxiv, 29 (εὐθέως). Reason indeed may be assigned for Luke's greater explicitness on this subject. Many of the terms are generical, and seem applicable to the dissolution of both fallen economies, and I cannot help thinking that Matthew xxiv, 27, applies to the Jewish dispensation. Perhaps, in the next verse, our Lord purposely generalises it to suit both cases, for the carcase and the eagles seem clearly the sudden and devouring judgments on a body from which the spirit of life was gone, whatever form it might have. And I think it highly probable that, though obscurely, what followed runs more into the Gentile than the Jewish fulfilment of the statement. But, in those two Evangelists, it was merely the glancing of the prophetic mind towards that which to them was not directly to the purpose, and, the dispensa-

tions being essentially similar, the terms had their fulfilment in power in that to which their immediate attention was directed, when the dispensations themselves had prepared the way. The larger scene might open, to which their minds were now enlarged, and in which the passage found fuller, and perhaps more literal, application, and which, in its appropriate place, was to be largely revealed. That the Spirit of God did so deal in editing these Gospels, I think quite manifest, for we must remember that, though not fully fulfilled in final results till His second coming, the Lord's coming, was, with separate purposes, hidden from ages but made known by the Gospel in various revelation from the day of the Angels' song till the day of the fulness of the glory of His Kingdom, and that the whole Gentile dispensation forms a sort of parenthesis, necessary indeed to the filling up the whole mind of God, but in dispensation, as to Christ, intermediate between those great events which were held out from the first, and together formed the coming of the Lord—the mystery that that nation, to whom He was to come, and called without repentance, should be dispensatorily rejected, and so the glory of His coming suspended till, by the operations of the Spirit, the Gentile economy should have been given its times, and both, fallen through unbelief, be admitted in grace according to that full salvation which was from the Father of lights with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning.

—27. This is clearly the Jewish gathering.

—30. Nor do I, though I think it intended to lead the minds of those to whom He addressed Himself to the immediate exercise of judgment on the Jewish company, by any means deny the truth of its application to the

continuance of the Jewish race, till the whole mystery of God was complete, till that μέχρις οὗ (until that) should be come, when it should be said: "It is accomplished." Blessed thought that the word of faith which we preach should have the perfect stability of the Father of the everlasting ages! Its force in this full sense is evinced and drawn in the Spirit of prophecy from Deut. xxxii, 5, 20. The tribulation of the Jews embraced the whole time from their rejection of the Lord as the Messiah, to their acknowledging Him again, till they said: "Hosanna!" from the time they blamed the children, out of whose mouth God perfected it, for saying it.

There seems to be designedly a cloud thrown over the time in this and verse 31; immense importance attaches to the certitude of the event. It is a question of the truth of the word of God; comp. 2 Peter iii. It is some great event; it is different from the 70 weeks are determined *(nekh-tak,* Dan. ix, 24*)*. The Gentile dispensation left this uncertain gap.

—32. "Neither the Son;" compare Rev. i, 1.

—33. "Take heed, watch and pray."

—34. "Leave His house;" the time is the return of the Lord to His house, sometime.

Chapter XIV.

—4. "There were;" this serves here merely to bring out the Lord's answer, and His view of it.

—8. How infinitely full of grace! There was no understanding in them of the position He was really in.

Could the Lord say of me: What he could he has done?

I do fear not; I fear a sad defect of surrender of self to the Lord. If we honour the Lord with what we have, we know nothing of the power or extent of the testimony. The Church has delighted itself, in all ages, with this woman's offering, to her own special honour. Yet is there none on whom my soul rests, or, may not I say Lord, desires but Him. "I count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of" Him, and that thankfully to be given to do so, but what I feel so lacking is the practical.

—10. Judas had heard Jesus was to suffer, and these things began to have an end, and money had been brought in question. The character of Judas seems brought out upon, and in contrast with that of the poor woman; he was the mere instrument, after all, of filling up the Divine counsel. The Lord in all holy and dignified calmness, with perfect knowledge of what was coming, could stamp His seal of testimony to the loving and Divinely directed action of this poor woman, and give it its value in the whole world, wherever the good news came that a Saviour had died. God was not unrighteous to forget her work and labour of love. Love to Jesus was His supreme delight. The anxiety and care of sin is just contrasted with the calmness of grace.

—12. As the Lord could provide for His royal entry, so for the last token of love to His disciples, and, though submitting and meek in all this, we see the perfect power of arranging, ordering, and pronouncing all things for present circumstances, or which should be. The glory of His title and power breaks through and shines through all, and as the rejection of His Person as Messiah was

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practically complete, and His death as Son of Man was drawing nigh, His glory, lost by the unhappy Jews in one, and which gave Divine efficacy, shone blessedly forth in all He said and did, as need called it forth, and in a rejected Messiah. There was no longer need for its concealment. There was a Remnant that He knew in the midst of the evil and the rejection, those the disciples knew not, unmanifested persons, to whom it was enough to say: "The Teacher says." A consolation to Jesus' soul, and a timely confirmation to the faith of His disciples; compare the conduct of even Elijah with this, blessed as he was—no broken-hearted retreat to Horeb here, but such a declaration of God's righteousness and truth in the great congregation as left the manifestation of God so on the soul, as that the control of His word was there, though the energy of the Holy Ghost had not manifested them to the world. Yet the Lord never departs out of the simplicity of His course. Then the Lord, when they are gathered opens His heart to them—one of those who eat with Him should betray Him. There certainly was beautiful confidence in their enquiry, for grief often makes humble in bringing down proud confidence in self; we have not been able to hinder the sorrow.

Compare Matthew, xxvi, 17, Luke xxii, 7, John xiii, 1, and Exodus xii, 6, 18. I apprehend that the consideration of the different structure of the days, makes the Last Supper and Passover quite intelligible. Thursday evening, our 13th, is their Friday, 14th beginning. I believe then our Lord ate the Passover on Friday and was offered up on Friday—we know that it was late, night, when He was betrayed, just after the supper; John xiii, 30, &c.

That was their Friday night. The blessed Lamb of God was offered up, He was crucified the third hour, and the scene closed just after the ninth hour—about three hours within the Friday. I know that learned men say "between the two evenings was 3 o'clock and 6 o'clock," but why? What is their authority? It is remarkable that the unleavened bread was to begin at even, *i.e.*, at 6 o'clock on our Thursday, their Friday, but the Paschal Lamb to be slain between the two evenings. Query whether that be not between the beginning of Friday (our Thursday evening) and the beginning of Saturday (our Friday evening), which was strictly fulfilled in our Lord, and upon this supposition every statement in the Scripture is consistent. The order is just thus then, as :—

Thursday, 13th, evening with us—Friday, last Supper; Friday, 14th—Friday, the Crucifixion; Friday, 14th evening with us—Saturday, "rested the Sabbath;" Saturday, 15th—Saturday, the high Sabbath, rested Saturday, 15th evening with us—First day of the week, Sunday, 16th morning with us—First day of the week they came very early to the sepulchre.

Our Thursday night, their Friday, was spent in the judgment hall, they not going into Pilate's, that they might keep the Passover.

—19. In Matthew xxvi, 25, Judas says, "Master, is it I?" Note the difference of spirit which dictates, and "Although all shall be offended, yet will not I," to Peter. And how traitorous the heart is!

—20. *et seq.* There is something very brief and solemn in all this account here. The Lord's mind was full, and the Spirit presents the truth as if it was too weighty

and near to say much about it. "One of the twelve, who dips with me in the dish;" all was morally contained in that. "The Son of Man goes as it is written . . . but woe to that man . . . good for that man if he had not been born." It is the pith and substance too of the institution which is given. "For many;" this carries it out into a further scene of grace, while verse 25 closes all His present relationship with earth, to be resumed in a future day when His Nazarite separation from them would close.

—27. But the time was coming when He should smite the Shepherd, and the sheep should be scattered.

—29, 30. "If all . . . not I;" yet it was no one but he. And our Lord's answer seems strikingly marked.

—31. I may remark here, in passing, that the evidence from versions from a reading is to be taken with much question, and also of the fathers, especially as quoted by Griesbach. The versions are, it is to be remembered, translations conveying the sense, and not always direct evidence of the words employed. Thus here, the Vulgate gives "*amplius*" (the more). I am not at all clear that it did not read μᾶλλον ἐκ περισσοῦ (the more vehemently), and translate it all *amplius* (the more). Indeed, I believe μᾶλλον ἐκ περισσοῦ to be of that effect. There are many analogous connections of μᾶλλον and περισσός. I would remark that, though we are highly indebted for his pains and profitable diligence to Griesbach, his judgment as to Scripture text and sense is, I think, exceedingly low.

—33. Τὸν (the) before Πέτρον (Peter) I suspect marks the surname. Let us never pass by the simple fact of the heaviness and distress of our Lord, "the Author and Finisher of faith."

—35. His soul was truly "full of grief." May our souls be made conformable to His death.

—36. The answer does not appear, *i.e.* upon the prayer, but the prayer is full of instruction. In the trials of the saints, when there is pure unfeigned submission to the will of their heavenly Father in outward circumstance, which, on the approach of the trial, connects itself with all the power of the trial, the prayer may not be formed on the purposes of Divine counsel, and yet be fully accepted and answered by separation of the circumstances, not from the reality of the trial, but from its power over the will. There was a submission of the will, from the beginning, to the Divine will, but patience of its fulfilment, in which the present actings of the will are concerned, is wrought in the soul by the operation of the Divine power in answer, and we are heard by reason of fearing (Heb. v, 7). "All things are possible," in whatever ignorance we may be, is abstractedly an answer to apprehension, if the person in fear has an interest in that will. Faith realizes this abstract answer in respect of practical exigency.

—38. "The spirit indeed is willing but the flesh weak," is not given as aphoristic commiseration of them, but as a reason for, and marking the necessity of watching and prayer. Do not rely on the readiness of your spirit, for the flesh in which you walk is weak; therefore watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. There was special allusion and graciously (for the Lord's soul was stayed and prepared for the evil) to Peter's hasty undertaking to suffer with Him, unsustained in spirit by going through it with God; he would soon sink in going through it with man.

—40. What perfect simplicity of truth there is in this statement! At the moment that the anxiety of redeeming the world by His own obedience unto death weighed upon the Lord's mind, when He was subjecting Himself to His own substitution to wrath for His sheep, to His Father's necessary will in holiness and justice! How do we see the place which the Son of Man held upon earth—subjection to the merest present circumstance when salvation is in question!

—41. He saw His way before Him—that bitterness of distress even to death, in which He had sought the stay of one to watch with Him, was over. They might now sleep; He knew that the hour was indeed come, and He had set Himself to meet it. Observe, our Lord was caused to feel that He was utterly alone in the conflict. His mind had unburthened its load, and He returned to them whom He had left as Man; but they were asleep. He warns them, and returns to that on which His soul was occupied with God, and which could be settled there only, and there only accordingly He finds, so to speak, vent for His soul, till He should have manifested to us the fulfilling of all righteousness for our sakes. When we think of His Divine glory, His being the depository of the power of His Father's will, we can but be silent before Him. Observe too for ourselves, the Spirit of God will lead us into timely prayer.

—44. There was something desperately wicked in Judas, after passing such time with Christ. But Satan was with him to carry the flesh through, and it is so with Peter. "The flesh is weak," is another thing as to state, if the roots are the same. It is bad enough, I mean even in effect. The Holy Ghost was not there though "the spirit willing." Satan had entered into Judas; no wonder his wickedness.

—62. "I am." "And ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven," is an additional testimony; all the truth must now be told.

—68. The first step was seemingly a little one, merely rejecting the impertinence of a girl, when there was no good in the testimony. It clearly was not the time, but it was all in principle. It seemed at the time as if it made no difference to any, his denial or not; it was merely avoiding the inquisitive intrusion of strangers when inconvenient to himself. So, often, in the world. They would have given no honour to Jesus, had He confessed Him, but the contrary.

How the boldness of nature leads a man into a situation where he is not in the way of grace, and fails to his own sorrow and bitterness of heart! What business had he there if he were not one of them?

—69. Compare Matt. xxvi, 71. There was conversation about it going on. How clear the scene!

Query: "The maid again began." It is quite possible that more than three may have spoken even if he only directly denied the Lord thrice. But there is no apparent discrepancy even, save that Matthew says "Another maid," and Mark "The maid." Bengel would say both did, but I apprehend it was the maid of the προαύλιον (entrance-hall) the ἡ θυρωρὸς (the door keeper) of John, very likely. The πάλιν (again) seems certainly to belong to ἤρξατο (began) in any case. How little poor Peter gained by having the fire, and going out into the porch! It is no use.

Chapter XV.

—37. There seems to have been something extraordinary in this great voice which He uttered, nor could it I suppose be thought natural at the moment of death. It might show that even on the Cross it was no mere natural dissolution, but that it was finished, and therefore He gave up the ghost.

Chapter XVI.

—8. It is the general effect on the heart and spirit, the result, which is more presented here than the detail of circumstances. This is evident in verses 14, 15, *et seq.*

—9. "And" (or "But") "Jesus having risen," (or "When He had risen") "early the first day of the week, He appeared first" &c.; the breach of continuation is less. No doubt it comes in as a statement apart. Up to this it was merely the fact of His resurrection announced to the women at the sepulchre, who stayed last at the Cross and, watching as it were over His body, were found first at the sepulchre He had left. This introduces His appearances, in a short general recital, to give, after shewing their unbelief, the mission of the disciples according to the mind and tenor of this Gospel. The whole thing is a *résumé* of the unbelief of the disciples, and then, after the Lord's reproaching them with it, their mission. It is not, in any way, a detailed history whose object is to give an account of what passed. This closes with verses 7 and 8. He was

to be seen in Galilee in connection with His own mission here, and His association with them. The rest is a testimony by others to them, distinct from this, and which falls on unbelieving hearts; and Christ, in a distinct way, sees them revealingly as to His Person, not in Galilee, and they have a mission to the world for personal salvation, signs of power being attached to their mission. With this His ascension is connected. He took His heavenly place till His return.

—15. "To the whole creation."

—20. "Everywhere;" again we have the introduction of the general result, but it is quite general. This mission "unto the world" — to the whole creation — was not from Galilee, but before His ascension, and their execution of it quite general. But note, while the Galilee scene is recognized in the current of Mark's history, there is no account of it. The account we have is of the Bethany close of the blessed Lord's presence here, and the mission thence. As Jewish expectants, there is still unbelief. The mission is not quite Luke's heavenly beginning at Jerusalem. It is from the risen Lord in Person. But it is not at all Matthew's; Matthew and Luke are dispensational—this personal, and for simple salvation.

Whatever the explanation of the end of this chapter from verse 9, it is evident, I think, that it is an added morsel. I have often noticed that it is the John and Luke aspect of the history which is added in a summary; but the ἀναστὰς δὲ πρωὶ (when He had risen very early) comes in unconnected with any governing noun, rather confirming, I think, its genuineness, but shewing it is not a continuous history but added, but its being "Jesus" assumed. It

assumes it to be Jesus, mentioned in verse 6, but has not the air of continuity. But while following the Matthew part at first, it takes up the other aspects as what the writer had at heart. Nor is it a connected story, for verse 9 does not directly connect with verse 2 ; " they " in verse 2 is general. Mary of Magdala came first alone ; verse 3 implies there were others engaged in the matter. They bought the spices Saturday, after 6 o'clock, and the two last went at sunrise next morning. It merely gives the general character of the history ; they find the Angel and flee alarmed, having received the message as to Galilee. Matthew gives the same history with more detail as to the Angel ; the women are thrown into a lump in verse 5 ; from Luke xxiii, 55, and xxiv, 1, 10, we learn there were several. Then we get the Mary of Magdala account, and the two to Emmaus. Thus verses 9 to 20 is evidently a calm retrospect on the whole scene, and its consequence ; verse 19 was forty days after what precedes ; and, verse 20, we have the consequence—it professes to be after the Apostles generally had gone out, knowing nothing of Paul, *quod nota.*

Thus verse 9 to 20 detaches itself more and more from what precedes. Its purport has been spoken of elsewhere. But verse 1 takes up the women in the general Galilean form, and passes from those who had bought the spices Saturday evening, whom it designates by name, to the general thought of the women coming Sunday morning. Mary of Magdala came, we know, before the sun rose ; there were the women from Galilee, and others with them ; in Luke, all lumped together, three and "others with them" being mentioned afterwards. The other Mary (*i.e.* of James, &c.,) and Salome who came, only Mary of Magdala

had gone before them and was alone. These three were at the Cross (*query*, was Joanna the same as Salome ?) He who had alarmed the keepers without, was perhaps the same that peacefully told the women not to be affrighted inside the general excavation of the sepulchre, and shewed them the particular place where the Lord had lain. The contrast is purposed in Matthew xxviii, 4, 5. But Mary of Magdala was alone and apart. Except Jesus' meeting them the account of Matthew and Mark is identical, only Mark gives the effect in their speaking to no one, as they fled to tell the disciples. But in verse 9, we have Mary of Magdala, not mixed up in the general history as in Matthew, verse 1 of this chapter, and Luke ; it begins a totally different aspect of the story with ἀναστὰς (being risen) referring to Jesus, not named here nor in what precedes, not as a person writing continuously, but, taking for granted that Jesus was in question, begins a separate account about Him, not about the women. Verse 1 quite falls in with the statements in Matthew and Luke, giving what the women in general were about in their love to the Lord ; but verse 9 repeats "Mary of Magdala" in a quite distinct and separate personal character, and yet vaguely, with nothing of Peter and John, which John, one of them, so clearly and graphically relates. This and the Emmaus disciples are introduced to shew the unbelief of the disciples. It is not very easy to reconcile this and Luke, still the transition from unbelief to faith is not unnatural, and, though they spoke of His appearing to Simon, on report, yet they evidently were not prepared to see Him. It is easier to believe death than life. The grace in which the Lord convinces them is most touching. But the whole

passage is as if it were a recital of what had happened a good while ago, and added to complete the account left unfinished in the air, and what was known by report or general common information. Yet I do not reject it. The insertion of it may be inspired of God, as giving a general account of what was after the Acts—perhaps through John himself—and this is the way I am inclined to look for it. One thing is clear—verse 20, shews it was written after the dispersion of the Twelve from their old local work, and knows nothing of Paul and the Acts, is based on the ascension, not on the Galilee mission, and passes from it to the late general mission of the Twelve; verses 15, 16 also give this.

The difference noticed at the end of Mark is quite evident. I mean the Jewish meeting with the Lord, and the heavenly one, Matthew having only the Jewish, and Luke the heavenly—Mark both, only verses 15—18 are more general, as is the case with Mark who speaks of the Gospel as we might almost. I have looked through Mark to see how the general strain bears on this. I find first, it contains much more His personal testimony (not His Person) and its authority. The contrast (perhaps from the rapidity of his statement of events) of the Jews with Him, their opposition to His testimony, and display of Divine power, more distinctly prominent. It is not the careful presenting Him according to promise, as in Matthew, finally rejected, but His personal testimony, by word and work, brought immediately into collision with their unbelief and prejudices. In the first chapter we have the display of power acting on them, but from ch. ii. we have the opposition, as verses 7, 16, 24, ch. iii., 6, 22, and the

rejection of His place among the Jews by birth, already, at the end of ch. iii. Thereupon, the Sower and Christ—peculiar to Mark—personally at beginning and ending. So the testimony is general—a candle not under a bushel. In ch. v. we have a general idea of the dealings with Israel, then and hereafter, the swine, the woman, and really giving life. In ch. vi., the Twelve are not forbidden to go to Gentiles, but John the Baptist is put to death. Jehovah satisfies the poor; but He separates from His disciples to rejoin them. In ch. vii., the Pharisees are judged—the whole system judged morally; and what man is shewn, and mercy shewn to Gentiles; grace makes the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak. In ch. viii., the Remnant is dealt with in sovereign grace, the disciples even understand nothing, the opening the eyes of the blind is wrought outside the town, and gradually; from that the general testimony of rejection, and taking up the Cross to have the glory. Life must be lost to save it.

I have longed to begin and to read the Gospels which remain (Mark and Luke) yet now I find it is communion and glory that my soul desires, not knowledge. Yet should I refuse to learn what is given here, were it only even for others, and I passed on to where my thoughts and hopes are, and where we shall see Him in higher, His own glory, and know as we are known according to His fulness, I feel as if I was coming down to earth again, having known Him in glory, thus to study that Blessed One even on earth, perfect, Divine and admirable as all His ways were. But we must take it as it is presented, and leave our minds open for all Divine truth, but I so felt, and feel yet, the rays of that Divine glory, and where

He now is, shine on all the path He trod, until it burst forth again in Him glorified.

I return for a moment to the commencement of this Gospel. John the Baptist's ministry is called here, I apprehend, the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, because it was, whatever its claim, the good news about Him—"the Mightier comes." This ministry of John was the commencement of the testimony, as introducing Him. It was not merely prophecy—they were till now—it was before His face to prepare His way. This was the beginning of the Gospel; it was a special thing. I do not see that the end of Malachi: "Behold I send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord." This is not the Gospel, as here spoken of. As to the reading "in the prophets," it was probably "prophet" or "prophets" and "Isaiah" a gloss, and "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way," was introduced; otherwise this last is a mere comment or explanation of what follows. The beginning of the Gospel was the voice of one crying in the wilderness. It was according to the prophets, but they were not it, the thing spoken of by them was it. "Behold I send" was a promise in fact to Christ, as representing and interested in Israel. "The voice of one crying" was the beginning of the Gospel. Therefore both are introduced; so that the plan of prophecy, and the beginning of the testimony are all perfectly introduced in their place. As to the critical point, the intention of the Lord in the structure of the passage being evident, it is of comparatively little importance, but may be further searched. The beginning of the Gospel, the good news fully recognized the place where

Israel was—in the wilderness. It recognized nothing, not the least, of the state they were in; so ever, they must go out to the testimony. So again ever; this then, and owning that the paths must be made straight; so in all cases, and grace makes the Lord enter into that sorrow and that effect of sin; there His paths are prepared, not in Jerusalem apostate, and we find that those who owned this accordingly believed on Him. The way was repentance for remission, the manner and effect confession. The effect however of this was very general, and made way for Another's righteousness. We know who rejected it and were rejected. But it was a different thing publicly to receive this and to receive Christ; then the claim was more in opposition to their present state, and found its opposition in those who shrunk from the recognition of what condemned them and subverted their importance. I may own the evil I am in; the Holy Ghost alone can effect a confession of what sets aside the evil I am connected with. While all the system is owned, evil and reformation may well pass, but Christ must stand for Himself, and gather, and the flesh cannot bear this; it requires faith, and faith is the gift of God, and the power of the Holy Spirit Himself. But human nature, wearied with evil, is attracted and subdued by a testimony against it, when, to a certain point, note, in such a time public adherence to, and owning the verity of Christ's proposal, are different things; the former requires the public action of the Spirit of God—power—display belongs to a new dispensation. Therefore the interpretations of parables, and symbolic prophecies are ever new revelations of the succeeding dispensation, *quod nota.*

John bore his own character, but he testified to One to come after, "the Mightier." There were two points as to Him, after the character of John was shewn forth, the (comparative) excellence and worthiness of His Person (for he does not speak of proper glory here: "He was before me")—and of His ministry or baptism: "I have baptized you with water, but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." Repentance and power are different things; the latter is the Lord's baptism. Fire is not here in question; judgment was not the point, but what characterised His ministry, what He conferred as contrasted with what He convinced of and claimed. Repentance, the return to God in a sense of sin, is a different thing from the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, though He may work in power to produce the former. "With Holy Spirit" is the character of the baptism, therefore no article. We have then the two things fulfilled in Jesus, for He comes in by the door, though perhaps we should say "because," for He only could do it, He was God above all. He is baptized with water (coming in by the door thus among the Jews) and is endued with power, not mediately but immediately. "God anointed" Him "with the Holy Ghost and with power;" I add this, lest any should suppose it might be taken ill, saying: "endued." Though full, personally, with the fulness of the Godhead bodily in incarnation, this is not manifest endowment as entering on ministry, presented before our eyes in service. To the first He submits. He came from the rejected seat of vileness, out even in Galilee. No proximate place acting on the national requisition (it is not said that was a seal—only Judea and Jerusalem affected by proximity) and connecting as One who knew

Israel and the rights of Israel, with the heart of Him who claimed its rights for it, and whose eye rested even on its despised borders. He "came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan." The love of the Lord's heart embracing all, even its degraded quarters, but coming, in the degradation of its despised and outcast corners, to submit to the necessity of its testified moral condition as a Servant. He was baptized of John in Jordan; His entrance into its real limits as properly owned of Him. But higher glory was declared on this submission; He sees the heavens opened, &c., and the voice came: "Thou art my beloved Son." This was the recognition of Him as a Man upon earth. At all times the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in Him bodily, for "in Him all the fulness was pleased to dwell." This was not the question, but as a Man He was born of the Holy Ghost, even as to the nature to which the Divinity was united, so was He sealed and anointed in it too ("for Him hath God the Father sealed"). And note it is not here merely it descended, but on His submission to righteousness He saw it descending. "Straightway ascending up out of the water, He saw the heavens open." It was not only acceptable righteousness on earth, increasing in favour with God and man, but on His submission to the righteousness of God, in the condemnation of Israel, and the baptism of repentance, He sees heaven open. All His ministry is characterized by this. It is not merely: "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen," for that was higher still, even what He had Divinely and previously, but His testimony to Sonship as incarnate, Man. And note the anointing or seal is a revelation to the Person Himself

for His joy and gladness, as well as a stamp known to God and others. "He saw heaven open, and the Spirit as a Dove descending upon Him." So was the voice addressed to Him of the Father: "Thou art my beloved Son;" indeed it is its chief character, though it has consequences surely. Yet was a Spirit of meakness and gentleness, as well as purity, for so is ever the Spirit of Sonship, for it goes beyond the difficulties, and trials, and evil upon earth, and its pressure, and sees heaven opened where these things come out, and hears the Father's voice, which overreaches and passes through all these things. It has submitted to the recognition of the full moral evil, a thing much deeper than the national or judicial consequences, far deeper—has owned it with God, fully bowed to the acknowledgment of it, and passes into a clearer and brighter scene, upon the full confession of it, which is beyond, blessedly beyond, all this, where the Father's heart has its play, for the evil is passed and left behind, and the testimony is known in the midst of it, as the place whence it comes rises above it.

This then was the character of the Lord's ministry, submission to righteousness in Judaism, but a view and a consciousness opened infinitely higher. The coming of Jesus was a voluntary act to this—"It became Him." Testimony to Sonship; and knowledge of the Father's own voice is the proper character of present blessing brought in to those that have a portion in Him.

The recognition by His Father here was at the beginning, rather before the commencement of His ministry. We have that, in verse 14, chap. i, when fully manifested personally perfect in righteousness, and acceptable in

personal relationship; and coming forth now, submitting to all needful to accomplish His counsels, He receives this testimony. The course and accomplishment of His service gives only another occasion of the all-important and blessed testimony, and His patience to death to secure the Father's glory—the final witness of it in power in the resurrection, "according to the Spirit of holiness." This being done, *i.e.* the submission, with Christ willing, in us needed, and our wondrous grace, and privilege, and Sonship fully declared (the Father, in fact, known to the sons by the Spirit) "immediately the Spirit casteth Him forth," putteth Him out from this enjoyed shelter of Sonship into the wilderness (there John cried, there repentance and submission were proclaimed, for there in condition the people were) there we go back, but as sons; compare the groans in Rom. vii, and Rom. viii. "And He was in the wilderness forty days tempted" of the adversary, "with the wild beasts, and Angels," the ministers of God's providence and honour to the (humbled) Son of Man "ministered to Him" there. This is an important point of the entrance on ministry. Moses passed forty days in intercourse with God, with Jehovah, before he comes down to exercise that ministry in the giving of the Law, and service of the Tabernacle, and the passage through the wilderness up to Mount Pisgah; he needed it for that work, and the broken tables (though on God's part most righteous perhaps) needed from this meekest of men another forty days of exercise there. Yet was the place of Jesus, there in the wilderness, far more wonderful, and, when known, glorious than that of Moses. Moses, "as a servant" faithful in all His house, had need to be taken up to see the Lord, that the witness of the

power and glory might shine forth with the authority and power of communion.

The Law must reflect the glory, and its communicator and mediator, both for competency, and for its bearing on others, have intercourse with and come forth from such a presence into which for the purpose he had been introduced. But this One, the Lord, had ever dwelt there. He was come down interested in those who were the witnesses of a broken law, and a dishonoured God, and utterly ruined man, and the prevailing power of Satan. He must go into the wilderness and meet Satan there—this was the forty days suitable to Him—and in all this be tempted with all that was suitable to withdraw Him from the place of utter humiliation, and service—born under the law, not its mediator, and responsible for the curse for us, which Moses had authoritatively, and with the glorious sanction of Mount Sinai attached. Here, however, it is its briefly but forcibly stated character, as ever in Mark, "He was in the desert . . . tempted of Satan . . . with the wild beasts," the power of ferocious evil, "and the Angels ministered to Him." The acceptance was not the less as Son of Man for the sorrow. Both John and the Lord, as we have said, in the wilderness, but one in the bitterness, though prophet, of judgment and repentance, the Other in the witnessed certainty of Sonship, and consequent trial, and temptation, and desolation, but with an honour due to Him and the heirs of salvation. Glorious as Moses was, and not in trial but in honour, the Angels were dispensers. Here, the glory of love brings Him low, as low as possible, alone indeed in these, in the wilderness and in temptation, subjected to the temptations of Satan, but the Angels are

ministers to Him. It is the same in principle with us. It was not the honour of proposing (as Mediator) what the Lord revealed, and required for blessing, but taking up in Divine love the total ruin of the whole, and this by being already in the secret of being a Son Himself, not something given for them to fulfil, but Himself fulfilling in love the need even into which the sons were brought. Having this experimental preparation for ministry as Son Himself, having received the seal and conscious character of Sonship as a witness, thus received in witness to His soul (so only available to us) and as tempted of Satan, what the Father was, and what the world (or Jews) was. Thereon, waiting in patience the appointed time, till the ministry of John was closed, till the emnity of the world had shewn what was to be expected, for the Son of Man should also suffer of them, in the manifested though not ripened apostasy of Israel, but in the fitting time of service to the Father, everything that would have deterred the flesh, everything that was a guide to the Spirit, the anointed Son, who had been tried of the evil one, enters on His ministry. John's casting into prison might have seemed to have made His service and ministry hopeless, but perfectly separate from and giving no sanction to, nay, having owned the apostasy of, Israel by His baptism by John, He enters exactly at the appointed, needed, and fitted time, when John was set aside, to bear testimony, and minister in the midst of Israel. But indeed, when looked into, and seen on the footing of, and in the midst of the apostasy as to such (however presenting all the good) and the presentation we have of the ministry here, John the Baptist presents the Person of Jesus, and what He would do as exalted—baptize

with the Holy Ghost, His proper ministry in this sense. It was thus the beginning of the Gospel of the Son of God. The Lord's word was, on John's being delivered up, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. That indeed was what was wanting in such a state of things, the truth of the setting aside of the evil state of things, that was to arouse specially to repentance, and to comfort those who sighed for the evil, and perhaps were persecuted for leaving it. When John was put in prison, it was a suited time for this, suited not to the flesh but to the holy testimony of God. The place of the testimony was accordingly full of grace to the nation, extending the full title of the Lord to His people and land, but having all the pride and evil which was associated in man's part of it, and saying: "The time is fulfilled, the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye." It was not merely blessing, or blessing to a righteous people, but to a people whose word of address must be simply, universally: Repent and believe this good news. This, to follow Him, called for total separation from interests, and possessions, and all relationships of life. He stood outside all (in mercy) saying: Repent, from God the Father (in Sonship), from Satan, the sum of the condition of things then learnt from apprehensions of mind, learnt personally with the Father, and made in the energy of the Spirit to go forth (cast out) and therefore experience of the temptation of Satan and the wilderness the Spirit led Him into. He goes forth when the evidence of the rejection of His predecessor, and their iniquity in the rejection of testimony was manifested, to bear His witness, and final gracious and patient testimony amongst them, in a word, from God and from

Satan—He goes forth in the full force of that, He goes forth into a world which had already proved what it was; but He was fulfilling His own mercy. Into this fellowship His disciples were called; they could not be of the world and in it, nor anywise associated with the world in which the testimony was sent. Efficient, Christian testimony is always, really proceeds from one who has this knowledge, and comes forth from this conscious acceptance by the Father in the power of testimony to Himself, and separation, by temptation of Satan, or according to the measure of that, from all that might be the question in the course of service, or hinder entering into it as sons into a mere wilderness, where he could use all we were not separted from against us.

The Gospel of Mark seems to present, as its distinctive characteristic, a vivid picture of the life and conversation of our Lord, and His walk on earth. It is much more than the others, the life and ministry of Jesus. I have heretofore referred to the characters of the three other Gospels; Mark's was then omitted, for I was not prepared to state what was peculiarly to be found of the Lord in it. But this has struck my mind much, and early, on this perusal of it.

REMARKS ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN.

The way in which God and man in One Person are united and presented in the blessed Lord in this Epistle, strikes me more and more, so that it is impossible to separate and apply them distinctively; chap. v, 20, giving the clue to it. Thus already in chap. ii, 5, in whom do we know we are? All previously is Christ as such, and His word is spoken of. But "in Him" is always "in God" here, nor do I believe that it occurs to the Apostle to distinguish them here; in verse 6, it is clearly Jesus Christ, for we are to walk as He walked; and it may be taken to be Christ in verse 5. But being in Christ is not the subject or tone of the Epistle as distinguishing Him. Verses 24, 27 makes "Him" in the last impossible to distinguish. Of what follows I have spoken elsewhere. In verse 28 it is Christ, in verse 29 it is God. In chapter iii, 1, it is God, "children of God," but in the end of the verse Christ on earth is the same Being; verse 2, it is God again, but like Him, Christ, and we see Him as He is. So chap. iii, 3, 23, clearly God—Jesus Christ is His Son—but "He gave us commandment" is Jesus Christ Himself. But in verse 24, His commandments are God's, and he who keeps them dwells in Him, and He in him, and He has given us His Spirit. In chap. iv, 2, He is the Spirit of God. In verse 12, it is clearly so, God dwells in us, and this is connected with His nature. Still it is God Himself,

and we dwell in Him; and it is by the Spirit we know, first we dwell in Him, and then He in us. But the source of it is that God dwells in us. Verses 12 and 15 are positive revelations of the word; verse 13 our experimental realization of it. In verse 16 also, God being Love, he that dwells in love dwells in God and God in him. Chap. iii, 24, is the outward fact, so that the Spirit could be distinguished from evil ones; compare 1 Corinthians, xii, 1, and following, xiv, 24, 25. But in 1 John, iii, the unity of God and Jesus as one Object before the mind is clear. There dwelling in God comes first, and then He in us. But the testimony of the Spirit is here only to Him in us, to guard against false spirits which were at work. In iv, 17, it is clearly Christ; but it is God and His love which had been spoken of before.

As regards God's dwelling in us, and we in Him, besides chap. ii, 5, which stands by itself, we have iii, 23, 24. Obedience, love to one another, and faith in His Son Jesus Christ. But this brings out the practical fact that we dwell in Him and God in us—the dwelling in Him being the state of our souls, when this life is so in existence. Here, His dwelling in us is the strength of His power and presence, which so belongs to us—this, known to us by His Spirit given to us, and, for the moment, the Spirit confines itself to this, guarding us against false spirits.

After that, having shown the connection of our new nature with God Himself, in its nature, and therewith the proof of love outside us in the gift of Christ, and God's love to us contrasted with our love to Him, so as to bring us up to Him, in verse 12, we get the great doctrinal fact that God dwells in him who loves. It is not merely a nature, but God

Himself dwells in us. We know it "because He hath given to us of His Spirit." But this is experimental, and it is first the consciousness that we dwell in Him. This is connected with love here as with obedience also; chap. iii, 24. If He is in us, who is infinite, and we so small, experimental realization is necessarily of dwelling in Him. But then we recognize the fact, doctrinally stated, that He dwells in us; and this is active in testimony of grace. Nor was it only those who had seen and known Christ sent by Love—whoever confessed that Jesus was Son of God, God dwelt in Him. It was not special attainment, but the privilege of every Christian; it was so of them all. God dwells in him, and he in God.

In verse 16, he returns to experience, the groundwork of faith in manifested love, knowledge of His nature thus—Love —so that he that dwelt in that, dwelt in Him and God in him. The doctrinal fact then is that God dwells in the believer, but then he dwells in God—infinite in love and being. Then practically God dwells in him, that he should be a living witness, and active in that love. For God gives us to enjoy Himself, and have part in that other blessedness, His activity of love. As to connecting God and Christ as One, see also chap. ii, 5, 6—a striking instance. Being in Him, verse 5, is different from abides in Him (μένει ἐν αὐτῷ). It is the fact; abiding is added here too when he speaks of the state, consciousness of it being expressed. Further, verses 7 and 8 speak of the nature of love in us; verse 9 takes up God Himself, its Source, and unfolds its actings in Him, and its enjoyment.

In the end of chap. ii and beginning of chap. iii, besides the wonderful bringing together God and Man in the Person

of Christ, and our unitedness to Him too, we have the nature of our new life as born of Him—the relationship, children of God, but unknown as He was, and then the result, like Him in the glory; the present practical effect being added.

I am not quite content with "lawlessness" for *ἀνομίαν*. It is an exact representation of the word, for "less" is privative as *ἀ*, but in English "lawlessness" has acquired the sense of active violence and reprobacy. *Ἄνομος*—it is a man who acts without respect to any law whose authority he owns to bind him.

Note too in 1 John ii, 28, 29, and iii, 1, 2, the remarkable proof of the way God is seen in Christ, often noticed already, as one great key to this Epistle. In verse 28, He appears—it is His coming—this is clearly Christ, in whom too we abide. He is righteous—so every one born of Him is righteous; here we are children of God—but it is "He." Then chap. iii, 1, the world did not know whom? God doubtless, whose sons we are (and here not the Father's love) but when did not the world thus know Him? When He was in the form we are—in Christ the Son of God on earth. No wonder it does not know us. He who appears is the same Christ, for we are to be like Him. He was in the world, and the world knew Him not; compare Daniel vii, 9, 13, 22.

In chap. i, "That which is from the beginning," notes that the life, though in its source eternal, was looked at as in Man, a new and absolutely original thing. This is very important as to its nature. The life which is our life is an entirely new original thing, as regards Man, for it was "with the Father" from all eternity, but it began in itself

in Jesus as shown down here. It is no modification of the old or first Adam.

In chap. ii, Christ is not a Mediator with God, but an Advocate with the Father, *i.e.*, He restores communion, fellowship with the Father, when practically lost. His advocacy is founded on two things—propitiation for our sins, in that He pleads in grace if we fail, and righteous in His own Person, our righteousness, so that this is the standing in which we are before God. Our place in heaven on one side, and the meeting of our need on the earth on the other.

Chap. i, 6, note, answers to verse 5, verse 8 to verse 7, and verse 10 to verse 9; light, sin and sins being the respective subjects. The structure in the Book is this: the Christian condition, chap. i and ii, 1 and 2. The full blessing and fellowship chap. i, 1—4. The testing principle of God's nature, and how, being sinners, we have communion, chap. i, 5—10. Our maintenance on failure chap. ii, 1, 2. Verses 3—11, the great principles by which we know that we know Him (not doubt, nor acquire the knowledge, but know in spite of, and as detecting false pretentions) having righteousness, obedience to God's commandments, and loving the brethren; but this is based on the great principle of being in Christ, so that we are to walk as He walked. The commandment given by Him when present being now in force, in that, He being our life, what was true in Him is true in us. Then from verse 12 to the end of 27, the general condition of all—forgiven, and the particular condition of different degrees of maturity is stated as the ground of the Apostle's writing. This in connection with chap. i, 1—4, *i.e.* the knowledge of the

Father, having the Son and the Father, eternal life, and the reassuring privileges of the weakest.

Chap. ii, 28—iv, 6, has a double character of test; ii—28, iii—23, states, on the ground of abiding in Him, the character of life, and extent of privilege, and its effect, bringing in and reasoning out the tests of righteousness and love of the brethren. (Righteousness seems more connected with abiding in Him; loving, with the new nature.) The second character of test is God's abiding in us proved by the Spirit He has given us. This however has itself to be tested by true confession of Christ, and by hearing the Apostles themselves, *i.e.* now their Epistles.

Chap. iv, 7—v, 5, is a blessed development of the love of God manifested to the sinner in life and propitiation in Christ, enjoyed and manifested in us in dwelling in God and God in us (true of every one who confesses that Jesus is the Son of God) and perfected with us in giving us to be as Christ in this world, so that judgment is looked at with all boldness since we are as the Judge in that according to which He judges—the righteous Judge is our righteousness (but this in the partaking of the same nature). Verses 6—12 are the witness; three, Spirit, water and blood, somewhat analogous to the three tests. Verses 13—21 are an address of detail as to restoration, under discipline from God, in the power of life in intercession, knowing God hears us. Verses 18, 19, 20 are the whole *status* of conscious knowledge by the possession of the Divine life which is the Son who is also the true God. In Him we are. He is the true One.

In chap. ii, 6 "He that says he abides in Him ought, even as He (ἐκεῖνος) walked, himself (αὐτὸς) also so to walk."

Remark the "He" (ἐκεῖνος) where it is not Christ in Person, so that God is revealed in Him, but His walk upon earth—the "himself" (αὐτὸς) without distinguishing between Him and God; see chap. v, 20, this last explained.

In chap. iii, being like Christ is presented as the measure of our ways, and, knowing we shall be like Him, we seek now to purify ourselves as He is pure. But then if we do not this, if we fall down under this standard, we sink down into the flesh, and hence into the rejection of all restraint and law. He who errs as man, the evil wandering of human nature, makes himself independent of the restraint and authority of God. Sin is lawlessness, not indeed the transgression of the law, but the casting off of law and restraint. Not only this, he who practises it is of the devil, for the devil sins from the outset of his condition as such. On the other hand, it is in contrast with the life and nature of Christ, slighting all His work, for He was manifested to take them away. In Himself also there is none, so that he that sins has not seen or known Him. But on the contrary, he who bears the fruits of His nature is the righteous man, and that according to the nature, character, and measure of the righteousness of Christ Himself.

Note also that 1 John i, always speaks of the Son, the Son of God as a distinct Person in such title and such relationship—a Divine Person and Being; as it is said: "We are in Him that is true," that is "in His Son," but as thus revealing God, and Son as regards the Father. We have the Son. The Father and the Son—the Father sent the Son; and the Son of God, so that being in Him we are in the true, for He is the true God and Eternal Life. We are never called

sons (υἱοὶ) but children (τέκνα.) And this is of great import and precious too. Υἱὸς (son) is a title and position given—most blessed in its place. Τέκνα (children) a deriving of nature and being from Him whose children we are. We are partakers of the Divine nature, as of His family—so to speak, His born children. Having His nature, and so like Him; He is righteous, he then that doeth righteousness is born of Him; we love, we are born then of Him, for He is Love, and so know Him. A son is a relative position and relationship; "children of God" is to be born of Him, derive our nature from Himself in grace. This is by that Divine life which is in Christ, which Christ is, being made ours by grace. And hence the Epistle unfolds it all in respect of its moral qualities, not its prescribed honours. Hence, as regards Christ, it is all through difficult to discern when God is spoken of and when Christ, because He is that Divine thing which had to be manifested; see chap. iii, 1, where God, and Christ in this world, are spoken of without breach or interruption in the sentence, as the same, and we so far morally the same as that the reason for our not being known is the same. So in chap. v, 19, 20, already quoted; compare 11, 12. There though Christ be Son and Life, what is naturally and essentially Divine is displayed and manifested in Him, and, on the other hand, we partake livingly of this Divine nature as born of God, and Christ being our life. It is a wonderful chain of blessing, yet evidently necessary in order that we should enjoy God.

Note again in chap. ii, 13, *et seq.* the little children, knowing the Father, are brought into an entirely new scene

of relationship where all is morally according to what He is, and see all things according to their relationship in grace with Him. It is a καινὴ κτίσις (new creation) of which the Father is the moral spring and key. Things are as they are in the communications between the Father and Christ, and as they are given to Him. All this is according to the nature of God of course, but in a new relationship. Now the word of God is the moral power and witness of this in the midst of things as they are, and this is the living power of the life and witness of those who, entered into the new relationship, become filled with the moral sentiments which belong to it. Christ was this in the world—Son with the Father, and the Word of God. It abides in the young men; hence the opposition with the world, the immense system formed by Satan, its prince, round flesh. Hence the Father and the world are in opposition ever. It is not God, for as men, creatures, it is His world and creation, but the whole condition of it, as built up under Satan, in connection with man's lusts, is the opposite of the Father's displayed blessing. The moral strength and energy of this brings the young men into collision with it. They are in opposition to its prince, here grown up into likeness to Christ: compare John xvii, 7, 8, also verse 6, as introducing them, and then 14—20 is everything. Then we get more, for the knowledge of Him that was from the beginning is drawn out in another form in 17—19.

Note the tenses in chaps. v, 18, and iii, 9, γεγεννημένος (begotten) is the state; γεννηθεὶς (has been begotten) is the birth, the consequence of which is that he keeps himself.

I add a word on chap. iv; verse 7 is "Born of God," for love is of God, and so knows God, for God is Love (v. 8);

v. 9, Love manifested in giving life through the Son; (v. 10) in sending the Son to be the propitiation. Not law but grace. Verse 11, we ought to love one another; v. 12, God dwells in us, and so love perfected in us; v. 13, we know we dwell in Him, and He in us by the Spirit given. Our present state, inferring duty (v. 14) "Seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son, Saviour of the world; v. 15, God dwells in every one who confesses Jesus is the Son of God, and he in God; v. 16, We have known and believed the love God hath to us. God is Love. He that dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him. Verse 17, Love perfected with us in being as He is, in this world; v. 18, No fear in love; perfect love casts it out; v. 19, We love, (not, we ought to) Him, because He first loved us. (Here first love *to* Him). Verses 20, 21, Tests of love, and obedience called for.

We have the nature (then the work in grace which proves it) the dwelling of God in us. The perfectness of testified love, in that we are His, and so boldness in the day of judgment; our relation, not our essential state; 7—14 is that.

The connections in chap. ii, 28, and iii, 1—9, are interesting. First our blessed place in association with Christ whose Person, God and Man, rejected and glorified, is wondrously brought out, and knowing that we shall be like Him seeing Him as He is, we purify ourselves as He is pure. As ever, it is a glorified Christ after which we are formed here. This is the Object we are looking to and running after. Then we turn down to the lower side of truth, "Whosoever commits sin" is lawless. It is the will of the other, the old man, that is at work, for that is sin,

the independent will of the old man which, having lost God, sinks into lust. That is not Christianity. He was manifested to put away our sins, and if we have the eternal life which is in Him, which He is, "in Him is no sin," the nature we live by is sinless. Hence, He who abides in, consciously lives by, refers to, confides in, and that continuously as dependent on Him as thus living by Him (see John vi) feeding on Him, does not commit sin; He in whom is no sin is the life in which he lives. This is not law, but life and nature, as the previous part was objective and responsible, with this difference—that was objective and so growing into increased likeness and purifying as He is pure, this a life which does not produce what is contrary to it. We see it is nature and life, for he who sins has not seen or known Him; only abiding in is moral activity. One is progressing in likeness to what He is, the other not doing what is contrary to the nature. Talking of transgression of the law is going clear out of the whole order of thought. It is an identical nature shewn in conduct, for He is our life. "He that doeth righteousness is righteous as He is righteous." I do not think "as" is measure but nature. The true nature of the sinner is as the devil's enmity and hatred. And He by whom we live was manifested to destroy his works. Verse 9, makes it clearly the Divine nature. "His seed remains in him," "he cannot sin" for that is not the Divine nature. The two characteristic marks are then given—doing righteousness, and loving the brethren. This manifests them.

In chap. iv, for the dwelling of God in us, we in God, and God in us, and knowing it, and God Himself, we have two points; first, verses 7, 8, we are born of God and so

have His nature and know Him, and are capable of enjoying Him; then 12, 13, He dwells in us and we in Him, and we know it by the Holy Ghost, because He hath given "of His Spirit,"—a double blessing but identified enjoyment. So Paul, more in grace and dispensationally in Romans v, 5. In Rom. viii, the first part, both are united—Christ our Life, and the presence and power of the Spirit. But this passage gives us the full blessing, the highest indeed, and the manner of it.

Compare also Ps. cxix, 165, and 1 John ii, 10, and note the difference of the character of the blessing. In the Psalm, and the legal blessing to the righteous man, there is nothing that makes him fall—and a true blessing it is. But in John, when grace is in question, there is no occasion in us, when we walk in love, to another's fall. It is just the same principle as when the lawyer asked who was neighbour to him. The Lord answered by a parable which showed how we are neighbours to Another.

MAN.

If Christ "died for all" (2 Cor. v, 14) it was because "all had died," otherwise there would have been no need of doing so. I need not go down into a pit where one will perish, if he is not in the pit. That it is not "all have died," *i.e.*, to sin, I think evident from the correspondency of all in the sentence, and further that there those who live are taken as some out of that "all" in what follows. He died for all "that they which live" (οἱ ζῶντες the living, not ζῶντες living). Hence he does not know even Christ after the flesh, as a living Jewish Messiah, whom as a Jew he would have known. God was in Christ reconciling the world. Nor does he know Christians—"So that we henceforth know no one according to flesh;" "so that if any one be in Christ, there is a new creation"—as belonging to the old creation to which they had died; nor others, for they were dead—their whole history. But if a man was in Christ it was a new creation; he belonged to that in which all things were of God. The whole subject is the promise of life in Christ as triumphant over death. Hence when he applies it, he does not say merely "who died for them," as when he speaks of all, but "who rose again," through the power and fulness of a new thing, for those taken out of death through Christ's going down into it. There was neither Jew, Gentile, sin, flesh, nor anything of the old Adam, or legal estate, but a new creation.

We have man looked at in two points of view in Scripture—alive in the old Adam, as fully in Romans, and

referred to in Colossians as past, and as spiritually dead towards God (where, note, death has nothing to do with conscious existence—it is as real when we are alive as when we are dead). In the former case we have died in Christ, reckon ourselves dead, have been crucified with Him. So Romans, Colossians, Galatians and in Ephesians even, "the truth as it is in Jesus" is the having put off the old man. But then the word of God goes further as to this. It treats men as spiritually dead, and their whole existence before God rests on an entirely new life. As above, if one died for all, then were all dead; John v, but "have passed from death unto life." In Ephesians we have the additional truth of "quickened together with Him," and indeed in Col. ii, adding "having forgiven you all trespasses." But to take here the point of life in itself—it takes a person out of a state of non-existence spiritually before God, and is a new creation. Hence it does not contemplate judgment nor justifying; John v. "shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life." Hence we find no justifying in Ephesians. We are "created again in Christ Jesus unto good works." It is a wholly new thing before God, which has its own character before God, is of Him; "Of Him are ye." It belongs to that new creation in which all things are of God—a holy, blessed, and righteous condition, which is a new creation, wholly of God Himself. That is what subsists in us, "in an earthen vessel," and in conflict. That it might be righteous as regards previous responsibility and ultimate blessing, Christ, the blessed and gracious Lord, died, and, if He is our life, we are also risen together with Him. If we do not come into judgment, it is that Christ bore our sins. We

were dead, and He not only has died for all, but, in coming down to the place of death, has borne our sins, so that being raised with Him then we are forgiven. He has accomplished what has put them all away, "Was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification;" so that we are justified by faith. Thus, to get this justification, we are, as alive in sin, baptized to His death, and thus die also to sin, and reckon ourselves dead, are dead, have been crucified with Him, nevertheless live, not we but Christ lives in us. This is the new life, but it is resurrection and life which, as Christ has died, come down to death (where we were) by grace is justification and forgiveness. But this, being death, is not merely sins put away, but life put away, so to speak; "sin in the flesh," therefore we read, "was condemned" (there is no question of forgiveness here, but of deliverance from a nature, "putting off the old man") by God sending "His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin." But it was condemned in death, and hence wholly done with for faith, "That the body of sin," we read, "might be annulled" (καταργηθῇ, rendered null and void). Thus it is not only and simply a new life, but sins have been put away, Christ having borne them in His own body on the tree, so that there is no judgment for those who believe, by Christ's word, on Him that sent Him. Sin has been put away (for them) by the sacrifice of Himself. Sin in the flesh has been condemned. The old man is put off wholly (for faith) by death. We are justified from sin which is condemned, but the old man gone—the body of sin destroyed. Thus the new man is clear in its place before God, through the death of the old as to life and the person judicially, because the sins of the old man

have been borne and put away, and the old man, Christ having died on account of sins, so that the question has been fully solved in judgment. Sin in the flesh has been condemned, put off and gone. All this is applied practically in Romans vi—viii.

There is more, because the work of the Lord Jesus Christ has perfectly glorified God as to all this state of sin, and hence the fruits of His grace have a place in the glory of God with Him, "Whom He justified, them He also glorified." He has been made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. It is the point of death and resurrection which connects, as in Rom. vi, and Col. ii, iii, justification, and being constituted righteous before God, with holiness of walk. We are alive through Christ, that is the new holy nature, but we are dead to sin —"How live in it" says the Apostle—we are out of the place and standing of the old man altogether—are not in the flesh—say, "When we were in the flesh"—but we are alive and in a new place, Christ risen. And this being by death and resurrection—first, Christ's, so that sins are put away, then our death with Him, so that sin, as the old man, is crucified, we are cleared from sins, have put off the old man, in Christ, and have our place, standing, and life, exclusively in Him before God.

The impotency of law to put us in this new position and get rid of sin, is treated in Rom. vii. It is impossible there can be any condemnation for those in Christ. First, they are set free (in contrast with vii) from the law of sin and death; secondly, sin in the flesh has been condemned, but by Christ's being a sacrifice for sin, so that that is no ground for condemnation. I am free, as to walk, from the

power, from the condemnation and *status* of it, by Christ's death. But this, note, brings in the Spirit, and hence is the practical condition, and applies itself to practice ; see verse 4. My whole *status* is a new one—righteous through Christ's obedience, set free from the law of sin, and sin in the flesh condemned, but in Christ's sacrifice. But I am passed in that from death unto life. It is to be noted how distinctly this connects responsibility, as to justifying from sin, with the old man, and how wholly it is done away. Acceptance is in the new, and responsibility to glorify Him, but that is another kind and measure of responsibility. If this be true, where is Christianity got to ? And, note, it puts responsibility, in the judicial sense, on the side where Divine life, Eternal life, is not—a point important as to some adversaries of the truth.

Note further in Romans viii, 2, though the object he practice, the point stated is not practice, not an actual state, but a position in which a Christian is, all Christians, he is *de facto* being such, set free—"hath set me free" (ἠλευθέρωσέ με). I was a captive—I am not. (It is not the same as "deliver," in "Who shall deliver" (ῥύσεται). The ground is laid in Rom. vi, in death, and alive through Christ, but here, through redemption, there is the power of the Holy Ghost in life and presence. That is the *status* of the believer, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," has made him free from bondage to the old man. Secondly, as regards the old man which still works in us, it has been met as to condemnation by Christ being a sacrifice for sin. It is a holy nature in power, and the condemnation of the old man, condemned on the Cross in Christ's sacrifice. Then we have to walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

But further on 2 Cor. v. First, the blessed state of the Apostle. If beside himself in an ecstatic state, it was not excitement or flesh, but to God; he was lost there. If sober, it was the thoughtful service of love to others; self was in neither. The two parts of the blessedness of God—His own blessedness in Himself—activity in love towards others. But this leads to the state of men and Christians, Christ's love constrained him instead of self. That was shewn in death for all, then all were dead, or He need not have died. There was nothing in man towards God at all. This formal work of love led then to living to Him, who had died and risen, those who did live. But thus the whole relationships of flesh were set aside. As to unconverted people, they were dead in sin; as to the converted, how near were they to Christ! Self, flesh, and relationships in it all gone. Even Christ known after the flesh as a Jew, he knew no more thus. He had died, come in that way. That closed the old Creation; Christ was the Head and Centre of the new. If a man was in Christ, he belonged to this new Creation; old things found no place in it—they belonged to the old Creation. But in a risen Christ all was on a new ground. And all things were of God—a new Creation according to Him, and of Him, and He has reconciled us to Himself. How absolutely all is done away of man, a child of Adam! It is not justifying a responsible person, though that be true. But He was dead, and there is a new Creation. Hence we have no justifying in Ephesians; God does not justify His own Creation. Here all is of Him; compare John v, 24, "Does not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life." And the ministry of reconciliation assumes our being far, and alienated from God—does not

touch on responsibility, however true and important in its place, and it is so. It is not Jew near and Gentile not; all is gone—man is dead. All were dead if Christ died for all. It was the activity of God's love—God was in Christ reconciling, not imputing; not man's responsible action towards God, but God's action towards him, and the world all one common alienated thing. And the ground, that it might be in righteousness, Christ made sin for us that we in Him might be the righteousness of God—not man's toward God as responsible, but be God's righteousness in Christ. In his place, the place now his, was displayed God's own righteousness through the work of Christ. The place and acceptance we have is His righteousness. But the old thing is gone, and it is a complete new creation. It is a very remarkable passage.

The difference too of Rom., Col., and Ephes., already noticed, shows itself in the whole structure of Colossians. Romans is "dead with," and "alive through" Christ; Colossians is dead with and risen with, and Ephesians looks at us as dead in sin, and Christ is first seen, there, *i.e.*, dead; then we quickened with Him, and raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Him, the Holy Ghost being in us. Now all Colossians goes on this ground—it sees the Christian here dead and risen with Christ. Hence he is to set his affections on things above—he is not sitting there. Hence there is a long practical preface in the beginning, which supposes him to be down here, though connecting his walk with the Lord up there; a hope laid up in heaven. It is to be worthy of Him. So, in 'are to be presented "holy and unblameable, and irreproachable" in His sight' time comes in. It is not the standing as in

Ephes. i, 3, without reference to time. And it is added, as if there on the way, "if ye hold fast." Even as heretofore observed, He has triumphed over principalities and powers, meeting all our difficulties, but it is not leading captive, and conferring gifts on those once captives to Satan. Hence, too, in the mystery; it is seen on that side of it, "Christ in us the hope of glory." In this position they were in danger of not holding the Head. In Ephesians it was the Assembly the fulness of the Head who filled all in all. Here it is all the fulness in Christ the Head, and we are not, as a whole, His fulness, but complete in Him. Hence the walk too is of the new man—Christ our life, not imitators of God; the new man in Ephesians being after God in his nature. In Colossians he is renewed in knowledge, after the image of Him that created him—not what he is but his state. We are the elect of God, holy and beloved; but both "God" and "we" are objective and apart. The Holy Spirit of God is in us, in Ephesians, and we are not to grieve Him, but imitate God, Christ being the One by whom we know love. We imitate Christ in His walk in Colossians. In Col., His word is in us. In Ephesians we are filled with the Spirit. This is full of instruction.

In the beginning of 2 Cor. I get the experimental realisation of being thus dead (sentence of death and bearing about the dying) and the power of resurrection on his spirit, chap. iv, 12-14, but not further than Colossian ground, and with the sense of the earthly vessel as necessarily of experimental, *i.e.*, as to death; the result in chap. v.

Note, the resurrection of Christ, and seeking things above, is used for the putting off. We have died with Him. That is our state. But putting on the new, Christ becomes

objectively all, and He is in us. "All, and in all." Then we put on, as being chosen and sanctified, and objects of love here; and this is conformity to Christ. Christ being in us, we are to manifest His character; even verses 16, 17 suppose them down here, though in what leads above, for the word comes down here.

Note too, how remarkably complete and perfect is the testimony in 2 Cor. v. We have glory by the power of Christ over the principle of death, absolute and complete, first—supposing we are Christians; next, death, which is going to be "present with the Lord"; next, judgment, the terror of which only leads to persuade others (for we are as Christ) and connects itself with our being now manifest to God. The ground of all this is laid in being "in Christ," so that there is a new creation, and we are the righteousness of God in Him.

LUKE.

Chapter I.

The character of Son of God as Man, as we in the new Man may be, is especially the subject of the revelation of Christ in this Gospel; first among Jews, but then brought out into its full character.

The Gentile character and style of this Gospel is manifest from the outset, but conversant with Jewish things; verse 5, *et seq.* is thus Jewish in character, which continues, at any rate, to the end of chap. iii, 20.

We have already remarked the general scope of Luke's amongst the Gospels. I would remark also that this Gospel affords abundant information by the way in which the Spirit of our God has brought things together in it; thereby giving us opportunity of observing the true intent and purpose of this introduction, and being modelled not so much according to the order of time, when that was not of their substance, but according to the mind of the spiritual instruction they were meant to convey; thus affording its own commentary, and throwing infinite light, to those who seek it in simplicity, of the judgment of Christ on the workings of the human heart, and what the true way of one walking in His Spirit is. It is a sort of moral commentary on the circumstances related by the method of their juxtaposition.

Mary first has the promises revealed to her, *i.e.*, their accomplishment. But as that is in Jesus, her question

brings out more than that—the Divine fact of the incarnation, and Son of God in manhood here. Mary has a more blessed position and tone than Zacharias. He fully speaks by the Holy Ghost of the accomplishment of promise, and all of course is true and blessed, and so they would be before God in righteousness.—Mary, only of mercy, God's present favour, herself having the sense of grace. It is not said that she was filled with the Holy Ghost and prophesied; she spake from the fulness of grace in her heart, that by the Holy Ghost surely, but it was grace and not gift. It is what God is, and His power, and goes forth indeed to Israel, but her own heart is with God. One is blessed in the Lord God of Israel—quite right too, inspired; but Mary is: "My soul doth magnify the Lord." Note, too, as to Zacharias, how what objectively received is all delight, and ought to be, is in application a test and sorrow. Though John has celebrated, truly mourned, and they would not lament, truth that delights the Church, as Christ's coming, tests the soul when applied, for His coming takes away from and judges all that is on earth.

Note again in the Angels, with the shepherds—first promises, read "the" people; but verse 14 necessarily comes out. Mary again is pondering things in her heart; so chap. ii, 51. How all is in littleness, and a hidden people, but God come in. It is all behind the passing greatness of the world which only accomplishes it. For the beast shows his universal power to bring Jesus' birth to Bethlehem, but all are small and insignificant ones—Jesus, Mary, the shepherds. But we do not find God anywhere so near in all the history of Israel as in this most dark time of the people. Blessed truth! Nowhere such intimate communi-

cations of His grace—only it was in a hidden, but deeper and truer way, *i.e.*, more of personal heart in it.

Simeon and Anna were old ones, passing away when the Christ comes in; the others vessels, nothing in themselves as even to bring in power, then passing away when He is brought in. Again, in Simeon we see that the light to reveal the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel, objectively looked at, is, in application, a sword through the soul. The revelation of God in Christ is necessarily a test to those who receive it, and of all in them, specially the hope of His coming to take them up by power. Simeon rests in what Christ is, Anna tells of Him to others.

It appears to me that, although their dependence upon the Spirit might have been perfect, yet in detail the Evangelists wrote under a perfect direction of the Holy Spirit in the minutest details of meaning and purpose, though it might have operated, in a certain sense, imperceptibly to themselves, so as to leave them to, or determine them by actuating their ordinary judgment and feelings, as far as consistent with His holiness. And this seems to me the case with all the Evangelists, and this seems to leave us the highest possible wisdom and testimony of the Spirit.

—2. "They delivered them to us." It is generally considered that this makes Luke draw his information from others who were eye-witnesses. I do not see that this is proved by this. "To us" is quite distinct from "to me also," and corresponds with "among us." As many had taken in hand to set in order the account of what was surely believed amongst them according to the relation of them to them by those who were eye-witnesses, &c., it seemed to him too, and then he states his qualification.

Luke is included in "to us," as a Christian, not specified as a writer; on the contrary, he also thought fit to do what others had done, according to the relation of eye-witnesses amongst the believers.

—3. Compare 2 Tim. iii, 10. "Thoroughly acquainted," "followed up," the same word as here translated "fully acquainted."

The term καθεξῆς (in order) is used only and frequently in Luke; it signifies properly, 'in a regular series, one after another,' and sometimes simply 'following,' or 'next in order.' Liddell and Scott say that the more usual word is ἐφεξῆς (in order, [one] on the next) and on that word they remark it is less usually employed of time than of regular order of arrangement. On the whole, I see no sign whatever that Luke uses it for chronological order, nor has the word in itself that meaning, save as chronological order is one sort of order. The passages in Luke are, this verse; chap. viii, 1; Acts iii, 24; xi, 4; and xviii, 23. Luke alone, as may be seen in the dictionary, uses ἑξῆς (next), see chap. vii, 11 (morrow); ix, 37; Acts xxi, 1 (next day); xxv, 17, the same; so xxvii, 18.

—4. The general value of the Scriptures—by them we know the certainty of what we have been taught perhaps by other means.

Note the order and character of the Spirit's prophetic or other testimony in the beginning of Luke, which seems to me very remarkable. Before the Spirit enters on the revelation of Messiah, properly speaking, as born and taking the place of the second Adam—first, the Angel's testimony to the child John (for all is Jewish in the part I refer to) he is presented in a Nazaritish character accord-

ing to the spirit of Elias, full of the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb, not a prophet called, and used as a vessel at a given time, but separated to God, a Nazarite from the womb. He was to turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. Next, we have the Son of the Highest to whom the Lord God shall give the throne of His father David, born of the favoured one—He was to be as Man the Son of God withal. Elizabeth, as full of the Holy Ghost, answers to his mission who was in her womb, and bears testimony to Another. She owns the Lord in Mary's Child, and wonders His mother should come to her. Mary takes the great ground of grace to the lowly one in her own person, but as accomplishing of the mercy promised to Abraham, the unconditional promise in the help afforded to Israel.

—5. How much more personal, and how much more personal communication with beings of another world all this is! This gives it a peculiar charm. It is the lovely closing scene of the Remnant of Israel. Christ must now gather round Himself, whatever His position.

—6. The light of the promises under the law was the instrument of the Spirit in forming the faith of men, and their obedience of faith was ordered by the law; and, according to this light, there were saints and holy men of old, and such manifestation of God to the world as gave occasion to those, who by nature were strangers to the Covenant, to acknowledge and serve the one true God. To them were these "glad tidings" as well as to us—persons who feared God, and wrought righteousness, and were accepted of Him, whom the Lord beheld with His countenance, and to whom the Gospel of salvation came as a

blessing on their faithfulness to grace received in that system which yet made nothing perfect, and could not especially make the comers thereto perfect as concerning their conscience. We may compare Paul in Philippians iii. It shows that it was not a righteousness of debt, of acceptance in the sight of God, but that which is contrary to hypocrisy—righteousness in his walk in life in sincerity of purpose before God, integrity of conscience as Paul: "I know nothing by myself," "yet," he adds, "am I not hereby justified." But this is by faith, through grace, in a previous revelation, rather by faith in that promised then, now revealed.

—9, 10. Is there not something significant in the place where this communication to Zacharias was made? He stood as the priestly remnant, but fruitless according to Jewish hopes, in the Holy place; it was not like a prophecy put forth by an inspired man to the world. "Entering into the Temple of the Lord," *i.e.* the Holy place, answering to "the house," in Solomon's building or Temple proper, which in other places is material; the rest, where the altar of burnt sacrifice even was, is called "without." The expression, particularly taking the circumstances into account, is distinct and illustrative.

—13. This, we may suppose, was a long entertained supplication; but the Lord had a better purpose for Zacharias than his own, though it was indeed an answer to it.

—14. Sometimes we are apt to think there are none, but there are many who rejoice to be changed, and hear of the new Kingdom, though it be humbling, and something bitter in the way; and there is joy and gladness in this.

—15. Some have said that "even" (ἔτι) should be

joined to "He shall drink no wine nor strong drink;" but this is simple nonsense, and merely unbelief in what is said. Τοῦ κυρίου (of the Lord) might be, but τοῦ (of the) is better away; the whole being characteristic of John.

—16. Note here again, not merely "Shall many rejoice," which some may be willing to do for a season, who are not turned, but many are actually turned; compare too, Jer. iv, 1. Note also genuine conversion may be by preaching repentance, and the declaration of the Kingdom prior to the Gospel, preparatory to the preaching of the Gospel; and, though the Gospel be the more powerful instrument generally, where the one the other will be received.

—17. "And he shall go before Him." It seems, though I am not fully prepared to exhibit the meaning, to have a very peculiar force, and, I think, declares the moral character of John's mission. It was not merely a preparatory declaration, though it was such, but it was one which had much of the manifestation of the presence of the Lord. It was not merely that the King was coming, but here is the King. He was identified with the presence of the King, and accordingly his ministry partook, not as regards the world, but as regards personal righteousness, fully of the truth and character of the Lord's Kingdom. He is the God that maketh men to be of one mind in an house; the glory of Christ might raise opposition in the world, but "the fruit of righteousness is peace," and the conversion of heart is the power of John's ministry. The immediate object of this is doubtless personal conversion, but it is a principle of universal truth and operation, because conversion restores all to subjection to God, and sets all the dispositions of the heart in order—so restores all

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things, whether as to the one God over all, or our conversation one with another in our respective relations prepared for the Lord, *i.e.*, for the manifestation of His glory. Such was the conception, so to speak, of the Lord's first coming; we are told its suspension in Romans xi. Such will be the preparation and power of His second coming. It was only to His people that He showed Himself in power, and it is only by the Spirit any now call Jesus Lord; then He will appear as Lord. Hence too, I think, we must conclude definitely that they err who confine conversion or repentance to the manifestation of the Gospel. I believe, indeed, that there is no repentance without hope and a drawing of Divine favour, but this is short of receiving the reconciliation, or Atonement; but we may remark much more decidedly than above, that where it is genuine it is ever in truth connected necessarily with the Gospel, and the difference flows from the difference of dispensation in its testimony, the one being ancillary to the other, and of its genuineness, further, this reception of Christ is the only definite test—the publicans and sinners believed, "being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him," though they were "willing for a season to rejoice in his light"—and, indeed, its nature, when considered this is the necessary consequence. The Spirit of God works upon the judgment and purpose of the mind, though there are many convictions apparently similar, at least to persons not experienced in Spiritual things, which may lead to nothing—a respect to the general privileges of the Kingdom without any conversion of mind to conformity to its nature. We learn also what conversion is—a turning

us from our own will of disobedience to the mind and purpose of the righteous.

As to the sentence itself, further we may remark that the Septuagint translation of Malachi particularly bears out the view taken above. The language of Luke seems rather to imply the turning the hearts of those who rested in the old ways, and were loth to give them up, to the new ways into which the children had freely received as not prejudiced by their own long-treasured, and self-appropriating systems. "Except ye be converted, and become as little children," says the Lord, "ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven," and it is peculiarly and justly expressed by converting the old men to the children, while it was natural that the children should derive their knowledge and judgment from the matured wisdom of their fathers, not so now—it was a new call of God who was about to make all things new, and knowledge after the flesh was contrary to this; the child, therefore, was him of whom it could be said: "Of such." The latter portion of the verse of Malachi is therefore not introduced, as not bearing upon the present revelation by the Angel. The word "to" sufficiently represents the text, but acquaintance, I think, with the usage of Scripture will give us very appropriate force in ἐπὶ (to). The Septuagint (Malachi iv. 6), for "turning," has the same word translated "restore" all things, and has πατρὸς πρὸς υἱὸν (of the father to the son) and ἀνθρώπου πρὸς τὸν πλησίον αὐτου (of man to his neighbour); here the word is, 'to turn' in the way of conversion, "return to the Lord," "when thou art converted," and the like. Also, "to the wisdom" (ἐν φρονήσει—to the thoughts) is as much as "by" as "to," though the sense is pretty adequate. It seems to

give the character of the change, not its object or instrument. On the whole I still seek for information as to the force of this passage.

It seems to me contrast with John Baptist's ministry and Elias's, as in its full sense, as in the latter day ; compare the passages. The land was smitten now.

It seems clearly properly Jewish in application, as far as it goes. But while it takes up the promise as in grace, takes it up only in grace as in Abraham ; compare Gen. xviii, 19 ; Deut. iv, 9, 10 ; vi, 7 ; Psalms, lxxviii, 5, 6. But while it thus, from the circumstances of its dispensation, takes up what may be called Jewish grace, yet it adds what leaves room for a wider scene—"the disobedient to the wisdom of the just," applied to the ordinary condition of the Jew. But disobedience could be found elsewhere, though not so formally ; but this holds the place of the expression in Malachi, "the children to the fathers,"—this was a blessing connected with their holding the Land, and their days being long in it in blessing—"the first commandment with promise," and that of continuance in the Land. For this we have, substituted here by the Holy Ghost, a moral benefit and blessing ; ἐν φρονήσει δικαίων (to the thoughts of the just) is the instrument and character of the conversion of the disobedient.

—18. Zacharias's mind was fixed on his having a son, not exactly on the Lord's dealings ; herein is much symptom of want of faith. Note, too, what he asked for was given him, though so as to mark and reprove the unbelief of the question. The Lord often makes the want of faith, and even the evil of individuals instrumental to our instruction, though we know not what blessing might have followed on the other.

—19. Here "of God" (θεοῦ) has the article (τοῦ, of the) properly. It was the actual place of Gabriel, not the character of His mission.

"To bring glad tidings" (εὐαγγελίσασθαι) does not scripturally mean the matter of the Gospel, but its character; so in Hebrews iv, 2, a sentence, I think, often used to an extent which is not borne out by its language—it is "to us as well as to them," not "to them as well as to us," and in that is the force of his argument.

—20. This savours strongly of a sentence on the Jewish people, even on the Remnant in that character; "in their time," "in their own season." John did not, as to dispensation, go at all out of Jewish position;" he, *i.e.*, his office assumed the restorableness of the Jewish system—reputing its outward Pharisaism as righteousness, but there was a hint in it they were to be restored. So Elias in Malachi, and there, as what it is more definitely in the latter day, it is "Remember ye the law." It is not resurrection and a heavenly life, but repentance and a blessing. The birth of Christ stood on its own ground though He might come to the Jews.

Gabriel was one so employed in service in Daniel—a blessed service, yet now of toil. How deep and wonderful the occupation of these heavenly beings! What objects in service they were made privy to! But we as heirs of salvation! Service in righteousness has however its own proper joy.

A great deal of this has aspect to the latter days, but covertly, because in Divine knowledge grace was to have another scope in heavenly things first. Note, as to this, it was Herod's time (Herod was an Edomite).

—24. Elizabeth "hid herself." All this is characteristic of the circumstances in which she was placed. It was to take away her shame, and yet she was ashamed. But the Lord had so dealt with her, yet it was in circumstances calculated to humble where His hand alone could remedy.

—27. Joseph was of the house of David.

—28. This salutation seems to be peculiarly destructive of the honours paid by many to the Virgin Mary; so v. 30.

—32. This character and title of Christ was Jewish clearly; even "Son of the Highest" is especially so.

—33. This is plainer looked at in its accomplishment in a time yet future.

—34. "How shall this be," admits the fact, and simply and humbly enquires the manner. This was not, as Zacharias, seeking sign by which he might believe the truth of the message, but a humble enquiry as to the Lord's ways, and so accordingly was the answer, exhibiting the liberty of heart too which simplicity gives. And it was made the instrument of our instruction in the mystery of the Incarnation. Note, Luke gives a fuller account of all this, or the Spirit by him, as being that in which the world was concerned. Although it was not to be passed over that the throne of David was His, it was more fully to be declared how He was, even in His conception into the world, the Son of God. Although other grounds of claim to that title might be revealed, yet that, in His entrance into the world, He should appear such as He was in truth, other grounds having aspect to other necessities of human infirmity.

—35. This is still all Jewish, not the Christian aspect of the title "Son of God."

—37. "Her that was called barren;" note this.

—38. See verse 45.

—42. The reality of these things is deeply to be weighed. I look upon Elizabeth as the mother, not of the Remnant returned with Zerubbabel from Babylon, but as the prophetic mother of Israel, as the Priest's wife. She brought the prophet who summons to blessing on the principle of priest and prophet of present restoration and repentant return in blessing to God. Mary is the mother of the mighty Man from God, which had its source in blessing to, but was not the power of the return of Israel; compare the case of Naomi and Ruth, not the same, for they merge in one, but closely connected with this subject. Elizabeth was not a virgin Remnant as Mary—a "favoured one" (κεχαριτωμένη) taken out by anticipation, as it were, from the hands of her husband—but was barren, though to rejoice after her long and unfruitful sorrow. Elizabeth believed nothing; it came by purpose, but in the ordinary channel, and that in spite of much unbelief. Here (v. 45) it is: "Blessed is she that has believed, for there shall be a fulfilment of the things spoken to her from the Lord." Elizabeth therefore again prophesies and blesses here, and she rejoices as one delivered, and in salvation, and the wonderful dealings of the Lord with her, Mary. The thanksgiving therefore of Mary is all of things accomplished and done. It is the proper celebration of Israel's joy in the gift of Christ, the Blessed One, as a fresh gift. She had known herself lowly (not righteous) and received it in unexpected grace, not in reply to long-sought blessing after a Jewish form. Still, as the exhibition of faithful mercy, mercy which endured for ever, but of mercy, not under law, as Zachariah and Elizabeth, but of promises to Abraham, it is power acting in grace to Israel, raising the lowly.

—51—53. This is strongly characterized with the matter and truths exhibited in the Word as the Object of faith, and connects itself with the prophetic Word. It is anticipative, I conceive, of the deliverance of Israel out of the low estate in which he was under the proud; compare verse 54, which applies it, as often in prophecy. It was the old looked-for mercy she now thought come—"We thought that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel;" so Acts i, 6, 7, which is the answer. The counsels of God with their wonderful order had no place as to the simple truth which her faith by the Spirit laid hold upon, that it was He who should redeem Israel.

—55. "To Abraham," certainly seems to hang upon "to remember mercy," which the "for ever" appears to confirm, though the whole sentence hangs together in unity of idea, for His mercy was much in the promise.

—63. Note, the immediate occasion of his recovering his speech was the exercise of his faith and obedience, and acting upon this faith in the Divine appointment and message of goodness, of the possibility of whose accomplishment he had before doubted. It was also highly calculated (though we should bear in mind the remark in verse 18) to promote the purpose for which John was sent, and to designate him as one in whom God had a special public purpose.

—65. This feeling of fear is worthy of great observation; we do not now refer to its source, but as the way in which any signal interventions of God affect the mind until it be brought to see in peace His counsels and way in them. Though perhaps they are indeed mercy, it is the ignorance of unbelief which does not yet know God as a Friend; see

1 Thess., v, and so in other portions of those two Epistles. He meets it in chap. v, 9, by shewing that it was the act of God's love towards them, and how they should feel about it. But if we do not see revealed love in it, we, as we are, must be troubled at any coming in of God, as it were. "And in the whole hill country." This is very like the truth—nothing forced.

—68, *et seq.* "Blessed be the Lord" (Jehovah) "the God of Israel."

The character of the Song is entirely and peculiarly Jewish. It displays, with wonderful enlargement and accuracy the promised mercies, and celebrates their fulfilment. This, says he (rather the Spirit testifies by him), is the horn of salvation in the house of David, the answer of all the hopes raised by the declarations of the prophets—the salvation, the looked for "deliverance from enemies" and "those that hate us." The performance of the "mercy spoken of to the fathers" in God's mindfulness of "His holy Covenant," and "the oath to Abraham our Father, to give us," I conceive expresses the general result as looked for in a pious mind. This is the salvation. Then, as to John himself, a separate subject—"And thou, child," &c., this is what is testified about him. The result in office, "To give the knowledge" of this in its true character, and as ministering to Him that should come after.

—72. It is not merely mercy promised to, but mercy made their portion, but not fulfilled to them.

There is nothing in this Song, nor in that of Mary (if inspired) which leads us out of the ground of the hope of the Jews; on the contrary, it is manifest that thus far we are presented with the faith of these holy persons in Jesus

(for upon Him mainly, after all, is the mind of Zacharias set, though not before him) as the dayspring that was arisen upon the ancient people and their depressed hopes as the promised deliverance of their God. So even the Angel, (as to John Baptist) "Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God." In a word, the Spirit of God as yet (before the birth of Jesus, observe), leads the mind of the Evangelist to exhibit the Saviour in His primary character as to dispensation and personal mission, according to the hope of the promises made to the fathers, and this by the faith of those who were looking to them as Jews, and to whom Jesus was not yet presented in the flesh, and therefore not the subject of the Spirit's direct testimony as come for a Ransom for all, "The testimony [to be rendered] in its own times," but "to His people," all through.

It is to be much noticed how mercy is laid as the ground of Israel here. We, acquainted with the Psalms, will have been familiar with it; so Paul leaves them on this, "In order that they also may be objects of mercy." All this is the true and full ground of Israel's restoration in the latter day, and casts great light on it. It is altogether Abraham, not Sinai nor even Jacob nor Israel, but a present fulfilment of promise and covenant to Abraham by mercy, and that mercy from on high.

—77. Note this verse, and compare Isaiah liii, which, I think, has primary reference to this point, *i.e.*, the taking away the iniquities of the Jews, by which they were hindered from the glory of the Kingdom. And so, when they look on Him whom they have pierced, will it be fulfilled in its direct and glorious meaning, for they above all were of the travail of His soul. "O Jerusalem,

Jerusalem," &c. "He came unto His own," &c. So Peter in his first address. It does indeed fully, in offering of atonement apply to the Gentile, as Paul was commissioned specially to declare, *i.e.*, the power of it, but in specialty of promise it belonged to the Jew, whose (see Rom.) "the promises" were, and the "oracles of God," and "of whom, as concerning the flesh; Christ came," as here particularly set forth. Nor is this ever departed from in Scripture; "It was necessary that the Word of God should have been first preached unto you, but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so," &c., which was his special office; so here, where the general truth of Christ's mission, and the principles of Divine truth exhibited in Christ, and to the Gentiles —in a word, what we are wont to call the Gospel—was to be set forth for the Church, as applicable to men, the larger scope of these promises, "a Light to lighten the Gentiles, the Glory of God's people Israel" was not forgotten. But this Gospel, specially written to exhibit Him as a Light to the Gentiles peculiarly, begins with setting Him forth as the fulfilment to the Jewish Remnant of their faith and hopes, and with this view, as this song of Zacharias directly testifies, is so distinct an account given of the birth of John the forerunner of the Messiah, and so expected among them. We may remark even John's words, when declaring our Lord's mission in the flesh, whose Gospel rises peculiarly into the abstract consideration of the Person of Christ: "He was in the world," &c. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not."

—79. He treads on the verge of general evangelism yet keeps strictly within it; see note previously. Here

the prophetic and mere Jewish character closes, and Christ, though born among the Jews, at once introduces joy from heaven on the earth; this does not come forth till verses 13, 14 of chap. ii.

This portion is then justly comprised in this preliminary chapter, for such it is according to the mind of the Spirit.

Chapter II.

—2. I am inclined to construe it: "The taxing itself" (αὕτη) "first took place;" but at any rate I do not see that it is Greek for "This first taxing," it would certainly be ἡ πρώτη. How this accords with history, I do not bear in mind, nor do I determine the force of πρώτη ἐγένετο (first took place). It might perhaps be this taxing was the first in Cyrenius's government, but the natural construing of the Greek is the first above. The verb ἐγένετο (took place) may perhaps destroy the article, but it must, I think, have it if construed with ἀπογραφὴ (taxing). I should not wonder if it were a marginal note.

If we read the phrase thus: "The taxing itself first took place when Cyrenius had the government of Syria" (αὕτη ἡ ἀπογραφὴ πρώτη ἐγένετο ἡγεμονεύοντος τῆς Συρίας Κυρηνίου), it cannot be: 'This first census,' for clearly it would be ἡ πρώτη ἀπογραφὴ or ἡ ἀπογραφὴ ἡ πρώτη. It cannot be 'of Cyrenius, governor,' not because the participle does not bear it—Lardner has given clear cases of such use—but because, as others have observed, there ought to be τοῦ before ἡγεμονεύοντος. As it stands, it must be read: "This

census first took effect when Cyrenius was governor," or "The census itself first was made when," etc., which I should certainly rather be disposed to believe the mind of the writer, the census not having been given effect to at the time Mary and Joseph went up. They went "to be registered," but it does not appear they ever were. Perhaps they took the oath to be well-disposed to Augustus and the interest of Herod, mentioned in Josephus, and nothing more was done, *i.e.*, not only no tax levied, but the regular census not taken, for Luke does not say it was. The decree went forth, and they went to their cities, but it is very possible and probable it was interrupted in its execution in Herod's territories.

It is to be noted that Cod: Vat: 1209, as also one or two others, reads *αὕτη ἀπογραφὴ πρώτη ἐγένετο* (the taxing itself first took place). Without *ἐγένετο* (took place) this would be: 'This was the first taxing;' With *ἐγένετο*, it is hardly genuine, but it would be: 'This first taxing was while,' etc. But I do not see that we should receive this against other testimony which admits the *ἡ* (the). As to *οἰκουμένην* (the habitable world) I see no proof at all it is ever used for Palestine, in spite of learned men; they only give wrong interpretations of Luke. I believe it to be the Roman world. Perhaps the Septuagint has so used it, Isaiah x, 23, and xxiv, 1; but in general it is the whole world there, not only when it is used for *tevel* (the fruitful, habitable earth) but also when it is used for *eretz* (the earth, contrasted with the heavens).

—6. This is not in Matthew.

—7. In this verse is complete Jewish rejection. Here too note chap. ii, 13. Such was the Saviour's place in the world; see verse 12, "This is the sign."

—8. "Keeping watch by night;" night watchers.

—9. "Was there by them" (ἐπέστη); it is always a present thing as a circumstance to us. "Came upon them," is well; comp. 2 Thess. ii, 2, "Is present."

—10. "To all the people." Is not this the Jewish people? There cannot be a doubt of it. "I am not sent," said the Lord Himself, "but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel": compare here Matt. xi, from verse 20 and onwards, and indeed from verse 16 with Isaiah xlix, 4, 5, 6.

The salutation is heavenly, and then afterwards (verses 25, 38) a Jewish Remnant own Him for the fall and rising in Isaiah viii, and "to them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." In Matthew, Gentiles come to own the King of the Jews. But the secret of their whole condition is shown. "The king" (for man had set one up) "and all Jerusalem with him." Moreover it was news, by the Gentiles to the Jews, that a Son was born to them.

—11. This was wonderful news: "A Saviour who is Christ the Lord."

—14. "Good pleasure in man" is stronger than "Good will towards men;" it is "good pleasure" in them—the interest of His affection was placed there. It is the same word as "In whom I am well pleased" applied to Christ. It is a very important verse. This was proper heavenly joy. It was not the announcement that had been made, but true joy announces often a great deal. This was angelic joy, goodwill with men, or to men, or in men; peace on the earth, and above; glory to God in the highest place of His essential blessedness. They had no sorrow that grace flowed forth. It was new to them. The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day, and this, and peace and good

pleasure necessarily go together. There can be no rest to the believer's soul till indeed it be so. Note εὐδοκία is not merely purpose but "goodwill," "pleasure," "delight," as in chap. iii, 22, "I have found my delight."

This seems to go into the general power of Christ's mission. It was a song which became Angels deeply interested in the glory of God, the reconciliation, and peace of the earth, for the fulness of the restitution of all things depended on it, and the good pleasure of God fully restored to men. Perhaps "peace on earth" may rather mean what properly belongs to itself in itself, as "Glory in the highest" does to God, as it is said: "Peace shall flourish out of the earth;" the effect of righteousness is peace, so too James. "Good pleasure in man," the words are few, but they evidently contain a distinct statement of all this truth contained in the counsel of God in its several parts, and are a distinct heavenly enunciation of it in its full results and purpose. The message of the single Angel was the special grace; the heavenly choir rejoice in, and celebrate the universal purpose. The order and enunciation of this to us by the Spirit is matter of much instruction. Still we find, while the excellency and fulness of the universal purpose, as that in which heaven's joy and universal song was engaged, is fully exhibited, the faithfulness to His despised and disobedient people holds its constant and primary place, and, as the exhibition of it was preliminary to the general setting Him forth to the Gentile world in the Gospel, so, in this heavenly announcement and song at His birth, the same order is preserved. Luke seems to have been directed as Evangelist of the Gentiles, and with whom therefore the lines of dispensation, as with Paul, were to be distinctly kept, lest

they should be highminded and wise in their own conceits, and count Jews but as a dry tree, as bearing what was indeed the root, to very clear record of what should stand forth in full and unsuspected weight, in the others not so necessary. So I read: "Just and Justifier," *i.e.* faithful to His promise, and yet the Justifier of everyone that believed, "the Jew first, and also the Greek," which need not here be further gone into.

These words indeed contain the expression of the perfected work, and we are to look for this, not in the hindrance of human unbelief, but evidently in the final super-eminence after victory over evil. The expression, "good pleasure in men," is very full of peace and glory, for once indeed, "It repented the Lord that He had made him, and it grieved Him at His heart." And after indeed He placed His name in a too unworthy people of His holiness, whether of the Jew or of the Gentile, yet there, while they would suffer Him would He dwell, for He had a delight therein. But now all the evil which made a Remnant necessary is passed away, and God's delight has free scope amongst men. "The Tabernacle," says the voice, "of God is with men . . . . . and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them," and then be "their God." But this is only the prophetic announcement of the act which should accomplish, for own encouragement, what is here displayed in forethought, in holy exercise and display. These things are ever true in Christ, but now hindered, obstructed, opposed, so as indeed He sendeth not "peace on the earth but a sword;" nevertheless they are true, in the power of grace and the energy of hope, to the believer, and all that is now overcome by them will be so put away

as to give the perfect liberty of holiness and peace. It is beyond perfect reconciliation.

These sentences cannot be too much weighed, as the heavenly statement of what is in Christ in power and prophetically, and when the prophetic word shall have passed away. We may weigh too, as to its prophetic import, the force of that expression: "Think ye that I have come to give peace in the earth? I tell you nay, but rather division," or as otherwhere, "not peace but a sword." We look then surely to some other revelation of Christ yet in the earth, and by Him, yet not of His first coming, for that brought division, yet flowing from it, for His birth was celebrated as the dayspring of it. The end, as to this, of His coming was peace; the fruit of His first coming was, by virtue of it, division. But this rests only in dispensation, and, though we may be exercised in that, we cannot dwell too much on the simple weight of these words which are beyond the fruit of all dispensation, and imbibe the Spirit of them, that we may be ourselves of that day, when the restitution of all things shall be; yea, of that day now, in the spirit of our minds, already restored to God. We shall find doubtless, practically, its present place on earth, but blessed are we if we find it. We may measure our portion in eternity by our apprehension of these words. Oh! who can tell what the praising presence of God will be? We may say: "It is good for us to be here." Why, this is already effected! If peace were not wrought, why should the Angels of God be celebrating it here on earth? So here we are with Angels celebrating peace and reconciliation. We say: "What hath God wrought"? O wondrous and surpassing love! Enlarging itself on every

side, beyond our thought, yet ever carrying it on through infinitude, so that we can only be silent before it!

The first Angel clearly announced the Jewish blessing, and humiliation of Jesus. The moment this was given as the sign, heaven takes it up. Here was "A Saviour, Christ the Lord, in David's city," and the sign was a Babe in a manger—no room for Him in the inn. This may seem a strange association, but if this were the order, then infinite grace, heaven, and heavenly glory at once came in, if the Saviour, Christ the Lord, was in a manger, in the city of David. It at once forced out the heavenly praise. This great, wide principle of blessing, of which indeed the Gospel is the witness, began with heaven. From this out, we shall see therefore Gentiles and man introduced. The grace which brought Him down was "Glory to God in the highest"—not merely glory to Him in the Temple, or any earthly people in their righteousness. This grace of His coming in this character, and His personal presence in grace, was peace on earth; and "Good pleasure," not merely in Jews or any special ones, but "in men." When Jesus comes in as King, then it is from earth by the disciples: "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest;" for then it was not the simple flowing down of grace accomplishing blessing, but the results of full victory. Heaven was at peace—the result of this great controversy with evil, and glory effectually resulting (as wrought and obtained) in the highest. It was not mere character and grace. But the commencement in heaven, and the result consequently taking in the Gentiles is specially to be noted. "Good pleasure in men" is very blessed and distinct. If

there was peace on earth, the Prince of peace must necessarily reign in His own city of choice—Jerusalem, the vision of peace. But here it is taken up in its heavenly character, not in its manner of accomplishment. We may remark, from being thus abstract about objects, affirmations of the effects of a fact; there is no article in the whole sentence. This coming of Christ is, &c.—this is its meaning. But this was but a gleam; and when the Angels went from them into heaven after this first intercourse with men upon the yet unrejected though humbled Saviour, the men, the shepherds, went to see it in its way of accomplishment here below, and to own Him who was the Object and power of it. There it was Mary and Joseph and the Infant, and this we have to follow now.

—15. We may remark the contrast of "the Angels" and "the men, the shepherds," as presenting the reality of the scene.

I think too we ought to remark the coming in of the Angels; first, as bringing in the First-begotten into the world; secondly, as interested in the reconciliation which, it is to be observed, is peculiarly the office of Luke's Gospel. The first Angel was a messenger—these celebrate the glorious consequences of the bringing in the First-begotten into the world; and as being thus brought into the world also is Luke's peculiar evangelical office, as we have observed. The whole of this is full of glory, the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, whereby He reconciles "all things to Himself, whether the things on the earth or the things in the heavens."

The shepherds' interest was in the message. We carry but little in our minds the amazing extent of evidence this people had of the glory of Jesus. The shepherds' praise

was upon finding, with thankful hearts, the accomplishment of the word.

—24. Certainly the simple poverty of the Lord is not to be forgotten, nor the calm subjection to the law by the parents.

—25. This was the bringing out (all that could be in this Gospel; comp: John's testimony) of a Remnant in Israel.

The righteous and pious man, and waiting the consolation of Israel—to him by Divine grace, while the common hope was the same, the present accomplishment of this hope was revealed. The Daystar was risen in his heart.

In all this the Law is distinctly kept in sight— prophecy might then carry Him into a further position—but there He was as a Child under it.

—31. "Of all the people," *i.e.*, all the *ammim*, the peoples brought into association by the coming of Shiloh. The Glory of Israel, to whom and of whom Christ was, as concerning the flesh, "a light for revelation of the Gentiles," had no limit on the earth. It found nothing associate, but brought them out to light on earth. This all shall be by the personal presence of Christ. This was the great purpose; the present effect of the revelation of men's hearts is in verse 34. Verses 29—32, are his thoughts before God as to His purpose and thoughts. Mary stood as His mother in nature; all that fell, even if it rose again.

—33. "Joseph" or "father," is in this so far immaterial, because He was legally looked at as his Heir under the law —very likely therefore "father;" comp. verse 41.

There is something exquisitely beautiful and holy in this certainly. How far can we enter into this righteous man's spirit, "waiting for the consolation of Israel"? We wait in

patience, according to our assurance ; so he—it was revealed to him that "he should not see death before he should see the Lord's Christ." He waited in holiness, and found it in peace. Note also, his perfect satisfaction arose from the full accomplishment of his faith, and to this faith he lived, but his faith was ordered by the revealed promises of God as to its Object. The peculiar accomplishment was specially to himself. So it may be now. It was kept to himself, had no previous operation on the mass, at least as a testimony. It might influence his manner of conversation amongst them. Yet was it not without purpose ; see note on chap. i. 6. The general hope was the same ; it was no hope but the common one of the Remnant.

—34. The "rising again" is not of those who had fallen. It would suffice to say : "The fall and rising of."

How fully Luke brings forward the testimonies to the appearing of Christ, as exhibited to Jew, and indeed to Gentile, as indeed come into the world ! This song of Simeon takes very high ground, and is very full of the Spirit of glory ; I mean as to the office of Christ in the world. It is to be observed that he makes both one in universal salvation, prepared (ordered) before the face of all people, though the glory be of Israel as God's people. It was prepared, to wit salvation in Christ, before all people, "A Light for the revelation of the Gentiles, and the Glory" (depending also upon εἰς (for) perhaps) "of Thy people Israel." Christ was a Light (φῶς) for these two purposes. "Taking thee," or "choosing thee," or "bringing thee," "out from among the people, and the nations, to whom," *i.e.*, to the Gentiles, "now I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the

power of Satan to God, that they may receive remission of sins and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me." This was the revelation of the Gentiles, their discovery in darkness by the Light come in, and admission to an inheritance among them that are sanctified, to wit, by faith in Christ. "What God has cleansed, do not thou make common." This was the revelation of the Gentiles. "Then hath God also granted to the nations repentance unto life." This was the revelation of the Gentiles; comp. Isaiah xlix. Such is the uniform sense of ἀποκάλυψιν (revelation; in A. V, "to lighten") as far as I find it.

But neither parts of this song are as yet fulfilled; nay, when we compare it with Isaiah xlix, we shall see, I think, that this glory must be after, and indeed yet to come. He is not as yet salvation to the ends of the earth, neither does Israel yet know, except the Remnant, as their glory; comp. Paul, Rom. ix—xi, particularly the latter, where I would note that though "the fulness" (πλήρωμα) of the Gentiles is spoken of as to come in before the removal of the blindness of Israel, it by no means follows, nor does it mean, that the earth shall be universally a redeemed people, but until the complete Gentile Church had been gathered. The thorough understanding of Isaiah xlix seems to be necessary for this, which see; and compare the language with this.

—34, 35. The searching of hearts, which the proposal of Christ in His genuine character would produce, is very fully described here. I suppose "the fall" (πτῶσιν) is consequent upon His character. They were identified with Him in His humiliation, so to lose all place and station. In the professing Church it would be to have their names cast out as vile, men separating them from their company, but so

also in His glory : "The glory which Thou hast given me I have given them"—glory in the mediatorial kingdom set up after His death, much more in the regeneration. Even she could not receive it without the same moral change and humiliation ; she must be born again, be humbled in all her hopes, and die to all her natural, her mental thoughts about it, before she saw or had any share in the glory ; yea, see her Son die. Alas ! we have too much discussion, too little simple apprehension of the glory of Christ. The general character, as it must have been practically, is of Jewish hope, though there be a declaration by the Angels, and the Spirit through Simeon, of the great purpose and the full operation of dispensation.

I am inclined to think that in these two verses, I have been unduly led by the authorised English translation, as though "rising again" and "fall," applied to the same individuals ; but I take it they are spoken absolutely. It would be a savour of death unto death, and a savour of life unto life. It operates separatively, being, though in the perfect manifestation of the holiness and excellency of God, yet manifested in humiliation as to all the expectations and glory of man. It is therefore "A Stone, A tried Stone, A precious Corner-stone," "A cornerstone, elect, precious," so as that many should rise into the glory of the Kingdom by it, but for "a Stone of stumbling and Rock of offence," and for "a sign to be spoken against, so that "for" with this "that" connects.

—35. Whatever the reading in verse 33 may be, whether "Joseph" or "father"—very probably, as corrected—the address to Mary alone in this verse is so marked, and yet with so little purpose, or apparent evidence to be drawn

from it, that it is very much stronger than any change of "Joseph" or "father."

—36. "Of the tribe of Asher." We are still quite in Jewish associations as to facts.

—38. "She coming up" (ἐπιστᾶσα). There is a time of patience in God's Kingdom, when "the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint," and from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot there is no whole part in it, when it is the part of the Remnant to hope and patiently wait for the salvation of God; redemption is all, though faithful, they now can look for, and the coming of their God; comp. Isaiah.

—40. We still walk with Christ as in Jewish hopes, *i.e.* as a Man the grace or favour of God was upon Him. It is the Holy Thing, the Child born of the Virgin Mary which is spoken of, and it is in that character, in this Gospel, He is spoken of as Son of God—His generation by the Holy Ghost, not His being Son with the Father before the world was. He is a Man, and in such sort spoken of; and they walk within the limits of His manhood, and therefore as a Jew, according to their place. It is: "His parents," and "According to the law," and "The custom of the feast."

—43, 44. The evidence of something further begins to discover itself, and this is just the character of this Gospel. In their hands it was "law" and "custom;" He speaks of and supposes they should wist He was about His Father's business.

—48 *et seq.* She still said: "Thy father;" but He, as a matter of plain understanding in His soul, "My Father's," with far different purport. Still, He bows as yet, for the full time was not come. It is His mother however who is

presented by the Holy Ghost as holding this place of intercourse with Him. She would treat Him as Joseph's son, and indeed their thoughts ran in an accustomed and habitual worldly channel; still she kept these things in her heart. But even in this claim Jesus is fully looked at as a Man, and specially presented as such, body and mind; He grew in wisdom, and stature, and in favour with God (for God took complacency in His perfection as Man), and with man, for the grace of God was on Him in all personally attractive grace, for testimony against the world was not in question yet here. Indeed these passages singularly instruct us in the consciousness of a principle of action entirely beyond ordinary claims, the most cogent, but the orderly and gracious subjection to those claims which cannot recognise that principle when it does not call out in responsibility of service to Him to whom it refers. Jesus is subject to Joseph as His father, though He had a ground of conduct altogether out of reach of this, but never as a matter of feeling, when the claim was in exercise for His service as sent and come into the world in grace. It could not be so in fact with us now. Grace will always clearly make the distinction rightly; Christ made it on either side—subjection to, and rejection of the claim in its right place. Indeed, Joseph disappears before He comes out into action. In this respect this passage, which almost alone touches on this part of the subject is of vast importance. Christ is a Man here distinctly, and therefore to the flesh a Jew, and so always, for indeed Jewish principles are the perfection of the flesh as it can be in the hands of man, and many things thus enforced, but Christ called and sent, takes out of the sphere altogether when so called.

His mother would speak to Him upon the common principle of the appearance of things—but she pondered it. Thus it was His own distinct consciousness, showing His Person, in which He was acting; nevertheless, as yet He was obedient as His place of service, to her and Joseph.

—49. I think it is evident our Lord spoke this in the unconsciousness of the Spirit. These various circumstances of the manifestation of our Lord in the flesh Luke is full of. They are very important, as presenting Him to us in His Person as Son of God, which, be it observed, He calls Himself, at least says, "My Father's business" here. It is evident the Spirit of God meant to exhibit the Lord to us here as passing through all the preliminary advances to perfection, which relatively man would go through, not as to Person for that is distinctly ascertained previously, but as to exhibition of faculty, so that we might fully see Him as Man; and note the manner of expression, and bringing it in.

Indeed we may remark that it is a primary exhibition of Him in contrast with His supposed place. His mother says to Him: "Why hast Thou dealt thus with us? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee distressed." His answer is: "Why is it that ye have sought me? Did ye not know that I ought to be about my Father's business?" putting His true character in contrast with her question, and the error theirs in contrast with the supposed owing. Yet, note, the energies of the Spirit are subjected to direct apparent claims when it is not a call of the Spirit from those claims. We may also remark how little the occupation of present circumstances applies, or really entertains in its mind, the knowledge which even it has, so that the assertion

is unintelligible, because it does not connect itself with present circumstances, as to which ordinary associations fill the mind.

Although in the fullest sense Jesus speaks here of His Father, yet still, I apprehend, we are introduced into apprehension of what He was as a Man in this world in this character, and thus it is He is presented in this Gospel—the Fulfiller of Jewish hopes, and Divine glory brought into the position of a Man, a Child, and so shewing the Son of God in human nature, as walking in the Holy Ghost. "That Holy Thing . . . . born of thee, shall be called Son of God." This was through the operation of the Holy Ghost; united with Him in resurrection this new nature is to be manifested in us. He is the form and pattern of it here below.

Chapter III.

—1. Unless Τραχωνίτιδος (of Trachonitis) be used adjectively, χώρας (the region) applies to Ἰτουραίας (of Ituræa) also, as indeed I judge.

—3. It was not a testimony here at all "Ye must be born again," but "fruits meet for repentance," addressing them as they were.

—3—6. "Repentance for the remission of sins," is not Christianity, though both truths be in Christian teaching. John's doctrine supposed their return as Jews, so that God should forgive them; it was not at all a baptism of death and resurrection. To whomsoever he was personally sent,

in the doctrine of his mission as a restorer of all things, he was a messenger to all flesh; so he is here introduced by Luke. It was to introduce to "all flesh" "the salvation of God;" *quod nota*, for Zacharias's word "Thou, child, shalt," &c., "for thou shalt go before . . . . . to give knowledge of deliverance" (or "salvation"—same word as in verse 69), "to His people through the remission of their sins." The consistency of this is remarkable, for as he was sent, and gave this knowledge only to the Jews, as in verse 3, yet by the power of his mission, and by its very nature it ministered to His coming in whom "All flesh shall see." "Pharisees and Sadducees," says Matthew; they were the leaders whom it particularly concerned Matthew to mention from the nature of his Gospel. But here, when the nature and moral power of the doctrine to all was concerned, he applies himself to the general principle on which the people came out—the assumptive, unrepenting hope, of which the Pharisees and Sadducees were the peculiar promoters. It is an important statement, because though Matthew, writing to Jews, might designate specially the sources of evil there, and the leaders looked at as from without and above, this involved the whole principle and condition of the people. Individuals might come out humbled, but the multitudes, as the Pharisees, the leaders and the led both came on the desire of owning proposed blessing, as humbling themselves in compliment, yet, as privileged, willing to have Israel's light, but not laid low in the sense of individual and national sin. Personal change was the point.

—7. This is complete Jewish rejection.

—11. The spirit of selfishness, covetousness and grandeur,

and disregard of others—that, in a word, which is contrary to the word : "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," is that out of which especially we pass in repentance, as to its practical operation, the "fruits worthy," *quod nota.* This is what is marked in Dives in the parable (chap. xvi), as exhibitory of character of selfishness ; so, "You have received your consolation." "Wherefore, O king," says Daniel, "let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor ; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity"—a passage terribly perverted, but which is fully explained by this. Indeed it is the special nature of that corruption to place a satisfying, redeeming conduct for the fruits of a change of spirit, and, by copying the outward effects, preclude and get rid of the inward power which produced the things of which they are a bad imitation. But the moral instruction is important, and it throws light on the spirit we are by nature of, for repentance, when genuine, produces especially a contrast to the habitually furiously reigning evil. Then see the way selfishness is marked as the general spirit to be repented of, and thus the sinner is left, without escape, to conscience. Every mere religious habit almost can be put on but that which breaks through the habit of sin, and a man may be moral in everything, and offend in one point, so as to show the reign of sin, whatever his character may be. But repentance reaches all ; it reaches the spring of all evil ; it is not an outward following which fails somewhere, but an inward introduction of a new life, which therefore shows itself in all, and especially in that where it has found its conscience most clearly needing purging, and there the faithful steward of

the word presses. And note, we may do it in act, for the unconverted man kicks as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, when that in which his own will is is touched; he will assent to all but this. And here I say therefore is faithfulness on John's part the reaching the conscience by the habit to which persons are respectively attached or under subjection, generally selfishness to all. "What shall we do" is the common and easy word; its spiritual sincerity will be discovered by the application of a direction to do that which breaks through the habitual will. If the will of God be really sought, it will be acquiesced in as soon as anything else.

How much more moral John the Baptist's testimony is in Luke! Only the Person of Christ, judgment and the Holy Ghost for those that believe.

Luke gives the moral testimony of John in detail. All give the baptizing with the Holy Ghost as characteristic, and supplanting, I may say, the judged floor. In Matthew we get the moral judgment of Pharisees and Sadducees, besides the prophetic judgment (this in Luke is said of all the people). The sovereignty of God overrides national election. But baptizing with water to repentance is John's Israelitish mission before coming judgments. His testimony of Christ is a different thing, but he knew prophetically there was One coming who was to be preferred before him—indeed was sent to prepare His way. But Matthew iii, 11, distinguishes even here the two missions, repentance to the remission of sins, and then testimony to Him who came after him, who would purge His floor. This last connects itself with the Holy Ghost and judgment. So, even more distinctly in Mark i, 7, 8. Indeed this gives it most

definitely and clearly, though indeed Luke iii, 16, 17, is distinct enough from the moral part of the mission, and gives the two points—the Holy Ghost, and the floor purged. So that the mission to separate the Remnant is definite enough; and then the gift of the Holy Ghost, and judgment. Matthew iii, 10 and 12 differ in the first being individual judgment dependent on the fruit borne, the second dispensational, as is the baptism of the Holy Ghost. In John the testimony is different. It is first to Christ as Light, that all might believe—suited to the first division of the chapter. Next, verse 15, His eternal Person, coming after him, is preferred (γέγονεν) before him, for He was (ἦν) before him, *i.e.* in connection with verse 14, the second division, and is John Baptist's testimony that He of verse 14 was the One he had spoken of; verse 16 connects with 14. Only in verse 26 is there allusion to his primary mission of baptizing with water. This (verse 19) testimony comes as an historical fact by itself, his account of his testimony, not the testimony itself; probably after Christ's baptism, indeed it is certain, because "the next day" is clearly after it. And here the testimony is clearly different. He is the Son of God, but this witness was after He was anointed and sealed with the Holy Ghost. He verifies as to that particular Person borne witness to. "This is He," what he had prophetically said, that there was such a Person. Indeed, all from verse 15, is a separate witness (person) as from verse 29, to His work. Save the fact in verse 26, we have nothing of his actual mission As to this testimony John did not know Him at all. It was founded on the descent of the Holy Ghost. But this only definitely marked him out as the baptizer, but led to far wider testimony. But Luke iii, 16,

Mark i, 7, and Matt. iii, 11, are all prophetic persons saying there was after him a Baptizer with the Holy Ghost, far mightier than he; he knew Him not yet. But, when Jesus came to be baptized, he knew by the Holy Ghost that He was that mightier One; but not even then what came out by what happened after His baptism. John i, 32—34 has no specific date, save that it was after the end of Matt. iii. It merely records the fact that John so testified. In general, the time is not the object, but what he testified of the Lord. Three times the "He who comes after me" is referred to, but always historically as a past thing, verses 15, 27 and 30.

—16. John and his austerities are more acceptable to a carnal mind than the Gospel. The very scribes, &c., were willing for a season to rejoice in his light; it does not hurt pride as much.

"Baptize you"—how he thus takes the general application! Fire is judgment.

—17. His testimony to Christ, as regards Israel, was as severe as his own. He preached repentance. Christ comes in judgment to discern and vindicate the righteousness declared in the testimony. To the world He is the Lamb of God, though that may bring in more judgment. It is remarkable how the Lord effected this. He shall effect it undoubtedly in actual judgment, but He first met it (the nation) in grace (and therefore was rejected. How blind is man!) Yet this in effect was for judgment. But He came sowing seed really, though seeking fruit. Had He come in glory, it must have been judgment; but the want of conscience of sin made them not see this process which had its form in blessing in the Church, and that in heaven.

—20. This seems to be a common end to faithful ministry; it necessarily makes a man conspicuous, though he go into the wilderness, and he is brought into reproof with kings, nor can he change his word.

The direct account of John ends here, though he may be introduced in connection with our Lord.

—21. "Praying." We have still Christ as Man distinctly before us here. Here, as constantly in Luke, it is when Jesus is praying the heaven is opened.

—22. Jesus as Man was born of the Holy Ghost, and Jesus as Man was anointed of the Holy Ghost; both these have their corresponding truth in us.

The simple sentence is of the utmost power and manifestation, for whom should the Lord God call thus His Son absolutely, saying: "In Thee I am well pleased," but the Only Begotten? In whom could He be well pleased, and thus personally address in complacency and satisfaction, except Him by whom He created all things, who was the brightness of His own glory, to whom it was no robbery to be equal with God? I can conceive no higher demonstration of our Lord's nature—no possibility of the admission of weak man into the knowledge of the ineffable complacency of the Father in the Son, than this communication. And such indeed its purpose. Nor to any one else did the Father ever thus display Himself, or make His Person known, except in and by Christ—"he to whom the Son reveals Him." To the Son He reveals Himself in full complacency. Note what is said here, "In Thee" (ἐν σοὶ) is declared to be "in men" (ἐν ἀνθρώποις) by the Angels; suitably of course to their nature. It is a word much to be dwelt upon. "No man knoweth who the Son is but the Father." How

could this be if He were not God? Or how should the Father be the sole exception, if it were an object less worthy of His only knowledge? How plain a testimony indeed, in that verse, to a nature alike inscrutable to human knowledge, co-equal Godhead, alike equally above us, and One alone able to know Him who alone can know that One in return, alike unknown to all else, alike within the cognizance of either respectively. We would not go beyond what is written, but we see not how any can know God in Himself but Himself, or in what He can find pleasure worthy of announcement by Himself to another in this familiarity, so to speak, of communication but in One not Himself in Person, but Himself withal.

—23. "As was supposed," (ὡς ἐνομίζετο) is very marked in its meaning. "Thirty years old." Still as the Man here presented. Jesus did nothing till thirty. What patience there is in Divine obedience. At twelve He was conscious of His power, and Person, and mission, avowedly. But here He acts in the order of Divine direction in the Land. It is not a question of Divinely sent impulse, as, after His ascension, in the ministry of those called by grace, as Paul, Silas, and the like. "Which was," is better left out all through.

—24. The genealogy here presented is not traced to Solomon as royal Heir, but simply lineally, to connect by a better title Man with God as such. Son of Adam, Jesus was lineally Son of God so, but then bringing in a better and higher power of life, so as to give the moral character of Man from God, not merely responsible innocence coming first in Creation, and a natural living soul from God, but bringing the life of God into human nature, and without sin,

in God's life in Man, to us by resurrection, because the sin is there already. The genealogies present no question to me, because passing to a grandfather would make all the difference—one is traced royally, and then to promise lineally, the other lineally by mere natural descent. A similar difference would occur even in English law. The genealogy of title to an estate would not necessarily be the direct lineal descendant or next of kin of any given person, if the children failed in one step, or even the males.

—38. Jesus is proved to be the Son of Adam, and, in truer sense than he (to wit as Second Adam) Son of God, as in Matthew of David and Abraham; see note beginning of Matthew.

We then see Jesus filling up, and more, the measure, frustrated in the natural man by the sin of Adam, in the grace of God.

Chapter IV.

Although the fact has been noticed, it is worthy of note how completely we pass in this chapter from the state of the pious Jewish Remnant, of which we have so lovely a picture here under the providential authority of the Roman Empire, to Christ as Centre of all human hope. Christ Himself first overcoming the enemy who held man captive, and then presenting Himself as the introduction of good, of delivering good, and in truth the Centre of all, though here in the way of introduced good in power, but thereby the Centre though rejected. But it is the Man in whom the

Spirit is, and who therefore goes at once beyond Israel; verses 18, 24—30; and is engaged in the service of good. Verse 21 gives the characterizing presentation of Christ (I say "Centre," because Christ completely replaces, by His own Person, all the scene we had before). The sphere is in verses 24, 25, *et seq.*: His gathering, and the moral character of it, comes in the following chapters.

The subject of chapters iv—vi, is evidently the unfolding of grace in deliverance in this world, in the Son of man, only it is shown that this cannot enter into the narrow system of Judaism. It is the power of the Spirit in the Son of man. It is intimated meanwhile that He is there as the Bridegroom of Israel, so that the disciples who received Him must accompany Him in that character. His founding of a gathering system, and its character, is distinctly found only from vi, 13. Even in the call of the disciples we see the moral power displayed. Still, though the principles of grace are unfolded, the Lord, up to the end of chap. vi, is working within Israel. He works on principles which surely go beyond it, and show, as Naaman and Elijah, that they do, yet still work as belonging to it though in a separate way, and separating a Remnant. So the Lord sends the leper to the priests, and forgiveness of the paralytic is the forgiveness of Ps. ciii. In the audience of the people He separates the Remnant, and unfolds to them the principles of the Kingdom.

In chap. vii, I apprehend, the word goes further. The Gentiles have a faith not known in Israel (which owns indeed Israel, but is blessed for itself) which owns Christ Lord of all. This is connected with the power of resurrection from the dead (yet He was a Prophet in fact in Israel).

The least in the kingdom are greater than John Baptist, and the Remnant are distinctly separated for it; the nation obdurate. Hence we get a forgiveness, not governmental as to the earth, in mercy, however real it may be, but the simple forgiveness of a morally renewed poor sinner—a forgiveness which lets go in peace, the soul being saved by faith. This, though all happens in Israel, and owns Israel, is a progress, and on other grounds from chap. v.

Chap. vii closes, I think, this direct part of the Gospel—the presenting of Christ in the power in which He was come into the world.

The actings here are still of Jesus the Man. It is a very remarkable contrast—Moses, the man for the Law, and for the people to receive it from God, is separated to God for the forty days, and "did neither eat nor drink." But Jesus, perfect in holiness, perfect in grace, the Man of God's acceptance, in whom the life of God was, and filled with the Spirit from on high (not the mediator, however faithful and in certain sense perfect, of the flesh with the Holy God, but presenting the life of God in Man) is separated to Satan's trials and temptations, the forty days thoroughly, and He neither eats nor drinks. And this was grace, meeting withal the case of the temptation of the first Adam. This, in its nature, is a vast advance upon Moses. It was not one at all seeking direction and ordinance for man in the flesh from God as sent, even in any covenant connection, and so separated to God that he might justly receive it; but it was the perfection of the Second Adam coming, in the energy of Divine life and the Holy Ghost, to present this, and God's ways to man, and serve God really as well as in pattern in the power of this life. Therefore is He presented

in the energy of the Spirit to him who deceived us as to the old Adam, and hinders as to the new, to show the path of faith to the new man, as obedience in that energy. I do not see that it is necessary that our blessed Lord was tempted continuously, as to manifest temptations, for the forty days, but that He was separated in Spirit to this exigency, in the power of the Spirit brought into this place. The positive temptations clearly come after, as the two tables of stone were given at the end of the Lord's communing with Moses. He was led in the Spirit into the wilderness, forty days tempted of the devil.

—1. To separate Himself in power from the deceit and need of Israel, instead of obeying—in fasting of spirit and suffering. The world (His righteous glory), the Messiaship, the glory of Israel in the Temple—all were put before Him, but in vain. Jesus answered these temptations not merely wisely, but righteously, and this is our wisdom.

Better simply "in the Spirit," or "in Spirit," as "David in Spirit," &c. On all this compare Matthew. The sense however is plain. Nor is it altogether unimportant what in Scripture is, for it is a commentary on Matthew where we have, "By the Spirit" (ὑπὸ τοῦ Πνεύματος) and we learn the way the Spirit leads; it behoves us of course not to deceive ourselves, but I am sure His witnesses are sadly neglected. We may compare it hereafter, as belonging to the two Evangelists.

—2. The length of the period added doubtless greatly to the trial; its correspondency with others is obvious. It was evidently supernatural energy which made Him forget even His necessary food. When that was withdrawn, *i.e.*, when the special occupation of Spirit ceased, He felt the

need; and, note, then we come to the specific temptations in His ordinary state. But the other doubtless was the greatest trial; these were only moral trials such as Scriptural judgment could meet, but although given the other as that it might not surprise us, nor we count ourselves where Jesus has not been as to trial, the others only are given in detail, the wisdom of which seems evident. It is, as we have said, that ordinary moral trial which all have to go through, such as Paul speaks, "as is common to man," so that we are not to count it a strange thing that is happened to us, seeing, &c. Therefore the Lord's wisdom exhibiting the way of faith, and Divine testimony, to escape is set before us. Let us recollect that these are the things which the Lord really passed through. I feel almost ashamed to speak about Him as a sort of subject-matter set forth for our instruction. They were the real trials, as one of us, of the Lord that bought us, of Him whom none knoweth save the Father, the Lord of glory, in that both He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of One, for our sakes. Compare the note on τότε (then) in Matthew iv, 1. Luke does not say τότε (then), *quod nota.*

—4. The Lord having gone through the temptation, "If Thou art the Son of God," comes upon the result of it in Adam. It was immediate, Jesus had been announced such, as born here in the world. There was no command, and He came to obey, and He could do nothing. Man was not to "live by bread alone, but by every word of God." God's dealings with Israel, note, taught us about man.

The exercise of gift or power is always rightly subject to or ministered in furtherance of the great objects of faith,

not in self-display—that is Satan's suggestion—nor in supply of our own need, in that we wait upon God. The glory of God in the Gospel is the end of the believers', the sons' of God's, intention and rule of conversation. This, therefore, as it is the end, so it is the reason of miracles, and to be looked for in them ; in truth, it could not possibly be otherwise—it enters into the very idea of a miracle, seeing the Father has centred all His glory in the Son, and the Lord Jesus is the Centre and End of all the counsels of God.

It is to be observed, too, that in the denial the Lord does give that glory to God by faith (perfectly sanctify God as amongst men—He indeed not by measure—yet in the same way as we ought to do it in) which is the sole office of a miracle, and which the working it in this case would have been directly contrary to. We may see the craft of Satan, and the wisdom of Jesus. And, note, simple faith in the Scripture supplied it. So faith, by the simplicity of its own exercise and reliance in obedience in fact, proves in result to shine in the wisdom of God who directed by His supreme counsel. Note, it is a glory exercised in goodness. Faith, though it uses in obedience and wisdom, looks to God above and beyond instruments, and is absolutely independent *i.e.*, in its judgment about the power of God in producing effects, and dependence on His word, of means, yea, of life, and thus only God is sanctified as God. This is shown by acting on the word of God, independent of our judgment of human necessity, or the consequences of our not doing so, for God is the God of consequences, and His will is absolutely right, *i.e.*, all things are of His will, and have dependence on it; He knows the end from the beginning.

Our Lord's making the stones bread would have been not

depending upon God, but in truth looking in independence to the supply of means, and in fact using (as Man) His gift to unsanctify God as the Object of faith, instead of the contrary. This seems to have been precisely the failure of Moses, and in the same way, and by a trial the same in nature, though there necessarily unput, here only frustrating the intent, if it had been possible, of His coming. Besides, it would have been taking Him precisely out of that office which He came to fulfil, the right place of Man with God, that He might be their Mediator. If He had merely acted as Son of God, as Satan would have had Him do, and as He might have justly done, He would have failed, not subjecting Himself to the necessities, in so putting Himself in the place of man, so as to be such before God according to that, "Behold I and the children which God has given me," for "I will put my trust in Him." He could not have restored us as His brethren (declaring God's Name to us, if He had kept that Name concealed in Himself, instead of showing it forth in His own conduct, and that) as of one nature with us, as having taken hold upon us, undertaken our cause, put Himself as our Substitute to make it good for us, yet ours for He made Himself one of us, identifying Himself with us in interest, as He speaks: "It became Him, of whom are all things, and to whom are all things," etc, God could never have been set in this character, unless Christ had thoroughly humbled Himself as one of us, even unto death, as our reconciliation, and, so identifying Himself with us, restored us to God. Having passed through suffering in the perfection of faith, now, in that He liveth, He liveth unto God, and so if we be dead with Him, we believe that we shall also live with Him. We cannot

fully open this in words, for while He stands in our stead in His own perfection, yet He does so as one of us, the Head, and as made lower than the Angels, and in all points tempted like as we are, He is the Second Adam, and so not only as one of us, but as He in whom, and as of whom, we all stand before God, as the Heir of our infirmities, yet without sin, and looks from among us towards God in the personal interest, in love, in our infirmities, as He looks from God towards us in the power of Eternal Life, and authority, in a word, as God. This is a great mystery, such as Angels indeed desire to look into, even the Incarnation of the Son of God, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, declaring the name of God to man, and the cause of man to God (and the glory of God and our salvation are identified in Christ Jesus the Lord) alike Himself God towards man, and Man towards God, through the glorious mystery of the Incarnation, full of exalting consolation towards us, but indeed, as the Apostle speaks, if all its glory could be written, the world itself, I suppose, could not contain the books that should be written. Yet enough is written to make it the full Object of faith to us.

—6. In one sense this is true, *i.e.*, as to the power of deceit, as Rev. xiii, 2, yet indeed it is of the father of lies, and such accordingly in ungodliness, but only as deceiving men, while it is altogether subject, and so indeed Satan knows, as the Book of Job shows, to the authority of God, and ministers whatever he may design against God's children in the way of perplexity, trial, and great tribulation, to their exaltation according to the good pleasure of their God, though they may give their Father a needs-be to chasten them for their profit (of which he is the willing instrument,

as by it he would often deny the character of their Father to them) that they may be partakers of His holiness. And so the Lord here fulfilled all righteousness, "It became Him" (God) "for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, to make the Captain of our salvation perfect through sufferings." But as to that very authority which is spoken of in Revelation, Paul declares, and it is the faith of believers that there is no power but of God, "The powers that be are ordained of God." Satan may deceive by the earthly grandeur, but "promotion cometh not from the east nor the west, nor yet from the south;" for why? God is the Judge. He putteth down one, and setteth up another. Believers can separate therefore with judgment where the world sees contradiction.

Note also Satan's power on the imagination.

I have observed elsewhere the moral reasons of the order of the temptations in Luke. There was a mixture of truth and falsehood in the second by the passions of men, *i.e.*, as to the old man, it was true, though God overruled it as to the new man. It is here shown it avails nothing, this power; they are not yet taken out of Satan's hand, but the new man accepts nothing from him. The Lord's answer was entirely as Man as to the duty, nothing at all as to His title. It was not yet His place, and grace brought Him into this place, and He was not to assert titles there; it were going off the blessed glory and incomparable dignity of His place in grace. One little act would have done; it had been and had detected sin. The third temptation was much more subtle; it was not mere human, it was not Gentile or worldly temptation. The Lord, while subjecting man in the first, and exalting God in

the second, had answered not only as Man, but in the place where God had set obedient men, sovereignly, as a Jew, identifying Himself with the obedient Remnant in their place of patience, not of claim. Satan takes Jesus up here on this Jewish ground, on the plea of trusting God's promise in the midst of Jerusalem. But it was all pride, and questioning His promise. He would not go up nor try, as doubting was the Lord amongst us, which was just unbelief. Accordingly, Scripture was adduced here for this use of the promises. It was a temptation connected with spiritual privileges. Jesus' answer is still simply and entirely as a Man: "The Lord thy God."

Certainly, of all the distinctions, that of worship and service is the greatest folly, for in truth it makes our Lord say, if He mean anything, that He might do all that Satan asked Him to do.

We may observe that our Lord in these replies to Satan affords us the Divine principle of life, on which He relies, as applicable to the snare by which Satan would have seduced Him, if possible, *i.e.*, we have not merely the principle *in se*, but we have it, enlightened as to its power and application, rather the snares, of which we might not exactly know the moral solution, brought fully into the light of that Divine truth which shows them exactly as they are, and thus we have not merely a direction of conduct, supposing us walking aright, but in such a way as detects and sets before us everything which might entangle our judgment by engaging our affections, and thus keep us from the path of uprightness, as He says: "All things having their true character exposed by the light are made manifest." And we see the self-destroying character of temptation

when the light of faith is applied to it. It ought to be matter of our prayer that our daily conversation might, through the accompanying light of God's truth, be made the instrument, for it is all temptation, of thus clearing and enlarging our judgment as to the walk of holiness, that it might give us, in a word, experience, not of evil, but, as the word implies, refine our apprehensions and judgment, that we might have that which was truly good more separated and purged in our minds, the path of Christ more experienced by, realized to, us. Such is the fruit of temptations, and such may be the fruit under grace, if we hold fast the patience of faith of our daily conversation in the world. Thus we shall be able more to answer every man; charity will have more scope, and have more wisdom of action. We shall walk more with God, and according to the mind and purpose of Christ in this world, knowing no man after the flesh, but increasing in the fellowship of the Father and the Son. What I would press is that all our conversation is a scene of temptation, and that if we walk in the Spirit of faith (through the Divine teaching) which will realize, more or less, by patience the mind of Christ in it, not at the time perhaps, apparently, or it would not be patience, the whole is instrumental in rapidly enlarging our minds into a real knowledge of the Divine life, by the Spirit of God dwelling in us.

Our Lord's answers, we may further remark, are merely such as become a Man living the life of faith, in a word, the commandment of faith, of which the Book from which they are taken, is so distinctively the organ in the Scriptures. Though the temptations were suited to the Person of Him tempted, and the place which He held, in their character,

Satan (verse 5) offers in sin, where only its temporary deceit is found, what belongs to the children of God in their own inheritance, that he may be set up as their god in it, but which God alone can give the reality of. Note also, he proposes it to us when our own inheritance in it is quite out of sight, and we have the very contrary to all appearance, nor sign of having anything else, when we must walk by faith and not by sight. "The meek shall inherit the earth," and that in Christ. But Satan would have Him hold it of him, tempting Him as Man—Man in His humiliation—which was indeed to be His in glory. Here is overcoming—"To him that overcometh will I," &c.—so "Ye are they," &c. That which is true of Christ, is true of Christ's. Nay! it was for their sakes He sanctified Himself. But such proposals of Satan always militate against some duty, and this indeed is his end in them; they are therefore met by the duty; so the Lord here. The comparison of the whole of Ps. xci will show how contrary to its spirit the proposal of Satan was; nor do I see why we should disregard the omission of "In all thy ways," for to a believer it would reveal the snare.

We find, I think, then suited to the Lord's Person and place these temptations. First, the will of the flesh listening to appetite as such, God not being in our thoughts. Next, the will of man, dominion. Thirdly, carnal security or presumption; it is indeed unbelief, it shows itself in doubting the Lord's promise, showing itself often in the requisition of His interposition in proof to unbelief. Satan seeks to make us act upon our privileges independently of the life of faith. On the whole, a presumptuous claim, on our part, of the interpositions of God, due in promise to

His people, as of that which belongs to our will, and related here according to this moral order by Luke; Matthew giving them to us according to the accuracy of their historical occurrence, as I suppose. Compare also the omission at v, 8, of "Get thee behind me Satan, for." To the two former the Lord gives an answer verbally, applying itself to the act—here one detecting its moral character. Observe too that the point of guilt in it is peculiarly brought out by the rebuke, for indeed it were impossible that the children of God, as such, could so deal with the Lord their God, especially looking at Him as such, which, as children of God, they necessarily do. The deceit, as we have observed before, is the relinquishment of the character on the assumption of the privileges of God's people—a destroying of His name.

—13. There is an end, so "be patient," for the Lord is over all, all the while. If He tarry, wait for Him, for He will surely come, He will not tarry. This was Saul's error, yet He came, only to mark his unbelief. Therefore the practical word under trial: "Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord," for there is always a way to escape under each temptation, and the end will be deliverance when its due work is done; so Job. Nay! let us not frustrate the work which is, be sure, of God's goodness, by seeking deliverance independent of full trial. "Let patience have its perfect work." Rather say, knowing it is in mercy: Search, Lord, try the ground of my heart. Look well, &c., and note the confidence, Lead me in the way, for it yields peaceable fruit of righteousness—O happy consequence! in them that are exercised, note, thereby.

—14. This characterizes all the testimony here.

Note, the power of the Spirit is not withdrawn—far

from it—while we are under trial. It is manifested in integrity of conversation, and the same power which supports one through the temptation which tries, and represses it, when that is under the Divine wisdom removed, breaks forth in manifestation to the holy necessities of the Church and testimony of God in unhindered, nay, in sanctified energy of action. He was perfected through suffering for service, as in office—so we, for this therefore let us wait. The Spirit which leads us into service, first leads us into qualifying suffering. Thus, at least, the Lord is shewn to us. He, because perfectly for all, we according to the love of that God who makes all things work together for good for His children.

The above, note, is the strongest confirmation of the method of Luke. He overlooks here a long interval, as in John ii and iii; see note on Matt. iv, 12 and 17, and John iii, 24, during which much passed, but our Lord had not entered on His public ministry, *i.e.*, to propose Himself as the Object of faith; this, *i.e.*, His public ministry, Luke passes to at once; see note on verse 16, the "according to His custom" (κατὰ τὸ εἰωθὸς αὐτῷ) evincing the passing at once to the moral matter proposed. The leaving all to follow Jesus (chap. v. 11) does not imply it was the first time he knew anything of Him as a hearer. Indeed we know it was not, but, as we learn from Matt., when He entered on public ministry He called them to be with Him throughout it, "beginning from Galilee." A comparison of these observations and the passages will give them their force, though they are unduly scattered, and the subject of deep interest, as concerning our Lord's conduct on earth. Verse 14 takes Him up, that is, from His public ministry, which was

subsequent to John's being cast into prison, upon which He returned into Galilee ; see Matt. iv, 12, but between verses 11 and 12 there, and 13 and 14 here, a long interval, and much that was interesting from the first, for example, to the end of John iii.

—14—44. We have the whole sum of the mission of Christ. The grace first, 14—30, and then the power confirming the word. Still, no way seeking His own glory, His service is to announce the Kingdom of God. But note the difference of the way in which Christ presents Himself, to the simple fact of the Kingdom at hand.

—16. Perhaps He taught before this, but this is noticed, if not the first, yet as one affording His personal announcement of Himself, and therefore recorded by the Spirit.

—17 *et seq.* The Lord here is presented as coming in grace to Israel, not as seeking fruit, and Nazareth, representing Israel where He was brought up, selected, and the intermediate service passed by because now presented in this character. "He found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." In this character, the anointed Man born of the Holy Ghost, we have still seen Luke present our blessed Lord ; and this unfolded in the most blessed, and condescending, and tender grace, its fulfilment presented to them. "And they wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of His mouth." It was not faith, but it was new to them, and they were astonished. But they turned to His supposed family circumstances, and saw not, not only His Divine nature, but even the power of the Holy Ghost speaking by His mouth. The Lord then shuts up this scene of His position

in Israel by showing that a prophet is not received in his own country, thereon asserting the sovereignty of grace shewn in prophetic ministry in Elijah and Elisha ministering under the apostasy of Israel. This in grace was a solemn testimony to the whole state of things, but grace or goodness in God they would not have, claiming their own righteousness and privilege. This was a most terrible blow to Israel in pride; but it was really blessed grace. Without sovereignty there can be no grace, righteous grace. Note, Moses had not this principle revealed to him till after the apostasy under the Law, and there was then manifestly no hope without it, unless evil were sanctioned. Here the Lord begins with it, because He comes amongst, and identifies Himself with Israel as already ruined, but then He must take up this principle. Their anger at this knew no bounds but God's restraining hand. Thus passed His presentation to fallen, yet loved though rebellious Israel!

—20. How very strongly Luke gives us the whole scene before our eyes! There was something in our Lord's demeanour which came home as something not ordinary to their minds, and identified Him in attention and enquiry with the passage He was reading. The power of the Spirit was on Him.

I think it is evident that in Luke from the Temptation to the Sermon on the Mount it is more the character from the Sermon on the Mount, more the activity of the Gospel. It goes out into the new sphere, Gentiles, resurrection, or at least, setting aside death, peace to the soul, not merely governmental forgiveness. Then the particular present relationship with Israel, passing over to the future in power. Chap. ix then closes in the mission of the disciples, the

Lord Jehovah in the midst of Israel according to the power of millennial blessings—the kingdom, but the Father's house with it, His going to Jerusalem to suffer, and the heart tested in all respects as to service. Then follow, as is known, various teachings and principles, up to xviii, 34. Chap. x, 1—24, is the active final display of His dealings with Israel, Law and Gospel taking their place, or Law and Grace rather, in verses 24—37.

Something more especially as to part of Luke. After the Temptation in its moral order, chap. iv. 16—30, gives the thesis of what characterizes His ministry in this Gospel—Divine grace manifested by the power of the Spirit in a Man, but as such rejected; the new wine not being possible to put in old bottles. Verses 16—22 suffice to give the whole; 23—30 His comment on it; then, to the end, power as regards Satan's direct actings on the state into which man had fallen in physical evil through him and sin. He seeks not Himself but serves. Chapter v is grace calling round Himself, through conviction of sin, to be with Him—cleansing, forgiving, calling not the righteous but sinners—not power, though it was Divinely there (verse 17) as He showed, but grace dealing with sin. Verses 16, 17, 21, shew Jehovah's power present, but in and as a Man; verse 33 begins the incompatibility between this power and grace with the old Jewish ordinances, on to chap. vi, 11, drawing out hatred. Verse 12, He formally gathers out His disciples apart from the nation, then comes down and, continuing to exercise His power in blessing, shews the blessedness and true character and condition of those thus separated out of all to Him, but in their (the then) order of calling, *i.e.*, not as after His resurrection, ascension, and the giving of the Holy Ghost.

Note here how the preceptual direction of the saints completely follows, and refers to the revelation of God in Christ. When He reveals Himself in law-giving, law of course is the form of duty; when in grace on the earth, what Christ was there is reproduced in His precepts, as in the Sermon on the Mount, and here as may be easily seen by comparing the precepts with Christ's character, as thus manifested. So, in sum, he that is perfect shall be as his Master. They were to follow Him in that path, giving up all as He did. When exalted on high, it is the same thing, not: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," but: "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your intelligent service"—"As Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind"—"Hereby know we love, that He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren"—"Be ye imitators of God as dear children, and walk in love as Christ has loved us, and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice, to God for a sweet-smelling savour." "For us," note, but "to God"; that is perfection. So, as God is Light, "Ye are light in the Lord: walk as children of light"—"Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." We are to walk "worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing"; comp: Col. iii. It looks on too: "He that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself even as He is pure."

Then this grace goes wholly out of the limits of Judaism to the Gentiles, and shows its power over death itself; but this gives it evidently a new character, and the rejection of both John and Christ is fully brought out, John appearing not as a precursor, but as coming into

to believe in Jesus, who does not deliver in Israel, and is received on His own testimony. Christ is Son of man. We have then the bright and blessed example of wisdom being justified by one of her children, the wisdom of sovereign grace, a soul convinced of sin answering completely to God's intention and God's delight in Christ, to God's manifestation of Himself in Him, producing the full answer of the soul to it in confidence, forgiveness and peace then made known, while the Pharisee saw no one trait or discern in God Himself in grace present in his house, but was discerned and judged. But, how perfect! And what dignity in Christ's not paying the slightest attention to their remarks, but occupying Himself with the poor woman! Thereafter, the whole state of the case is brought out. He is sowing, not seeking fruit—they are to be witnesses, tossed on the waves of this troublesome world, but all discouragement is wrong—Christ is with them in the ship. He may allow the storm, but has power over it. Then the whole progress of the scene is unfolded, Satan's power destroyed by a word, but therefore the world will not have Jesus, because God's presence and power is manifested. That cannot be borne amongst men. The Remnant desire to be with Jesus where He goes, but must go back to the world for a testimony—the mass of Israel rush to destruction.

Then we find Jesus come to sanctify, when individual faith, in Israel, touches Him; one is healed, but as to Israel it is really dead and to be brought to life. He sends out the Twelve as a final testimony, shows He is Jehovah according to Ps. cxxxii. The question arises Who He is. Peter, the Remnant, owns Him as the Christ, and they are formally

forbidden to announce Him as such—the Son of Man is going to suffer, be rejected, raised, and they must take (we) their cross—the soul is more than ease in the world, and Christ will appear in His glories. Then the Kingdom is revealed, and the heavenly glory, or the Father's house, and man's entering into it. He still continues to answer faith here below, but that does not alter the fact that the Cross is the settled thing—the unbelief of the disciples shows it must be. Then the various forms of self that hinder our taking it up, hinder our following Jesus, are gone through, which make us unfit for the Kingdom of God.

The Lord then, in sovereign and persevering grace, which is above circumstances, sends out an urgent but final testimony, but, while thus dealing with Israel, brings in heaven as the true portion of His messengers—an evident change; unfolds this in the true, full character of His mission, the revelation of the Father by the Son in sovereign grace (yet in fitness) to babes, but shows the disciples happy in their seeing what prophets had desired, the true Messiah in Israel. The obligation of law which measures duty by a neighbour, is changed to a neighbour by grace in the heart towards need, as Christ was to ruined man. We then get the word and prayer as the way of blessing, but as in the then time, the Holy Ghost being to be looked for. The Lord then shows, what is ever present to His Spirit here, the entire rejection of the Jews as then subsisting as against Him when the finger of God was there. He rejects His natural association, and accepts those who hear the word of God. This rejection of the word and Person of Christ brings up Nineveh and the Queen of the South in judgment against Israel. We then have the way of Light in us, purity of

motive, and thus light is, as to everything, to be seen, and outshines also. Moral truths and reasons are thus ever mixed up here, principles ever true with the pending judgment of the people. But this judgment as to the nation is the accumulation of all the blood of the slain prophets from Abel to that day; they would be tested by the point they insisted on.

In chap. xii, the motives which keep and direct the testifying Remnant are shewn; everything manifested, God to be feared, God to be trusted, the coming of the Son of man to be looked to, the presence of the Holy Ghost to be relied on. He refuses present judicial maintaining of righteousness and turns to motive in the world, then to the ground of confidence for His disciples in passing through it; verses 22—34. Then His coming is applied to the state, watching, blessing from Himself—service, the inheritance; verse 49, the effect of His coming already produced. It draws out the very worst evil of man in a hopeless way, but the Cross opens the door to love, warns the people of the signs of the times, morally too they ought to judge, Israel was on its way to the judge. Chap. xiii, all would finish in judgment if they did not repent. But God was filling His house with guests in grace, Israel would not, and so should not come, but the poor and Gentiles fill it. Men must take up the cross, and better to count the cost first. If the Church lost this devotedness and Christ being all, it could not be restored even as Israel, (for whom sovereign grace and a new covenant might be) but cast out as hopelessly bad.

Then after all this discussion of the ways of God, the whole heart of God itself comes out, founding the system

of grace itself in grace as in His heart, in its fruit in heavenly prospects; the light of heaven being brought to bear on the present conduct with earthly things, and showing how they set aside the Jewish administration of them, as even of God in the land. Man was a steward out of place. But if Moses and the prophets had not taken effect, Christ's resurrection would not change them. In chap. xvii, it is remarkable to see how the moral grace brought in in testimony by Him, and the change of outward order dispensation go together in this Gospel, care for the little ones, forgiveness seven times a day on turning to the offended one, the power of faith, and, if all be done, we nothing. Then, Jerusalem set aside in grace, faith in a Samaritan finds the power of God in Christ. He need no longer toil up to Jerusalem; the kingdom of God was among them then. But days were coming when the disciples would desire one of the days of the Son of man. Now these days were such, but in the evil day (in Israel) they would, promising when He was not there, but the Son of Man would come as lightning in His day. That is unfolded—men ought always to pray; there is the universal moral grace, but the avenging the elect is, for faith, in Israel when the Son of man comes. They cry day and night to God for vengeance. He will avenge them speedily, but what faith will be so found expecting Him when He comes? Always true, the coming of the Son of man will show how much of it remains. The moral ground is then returned to. The confessing sinner more righteous than the self-approving Pharisee, and if all the law were kept to have eternal life, the heart's alienation searched out, and made manifest; but therein present Judaism judged. The

Apostles who followed Him would have the kingdom, but the Son of Man must suffer.

Then the final history begins with the blind man, and Jesus presents Himself finally as Son of David to Jerusalem. Still, even here, the great moral principles and grace are brought out in Zaccheus. Salvation came to a publican then; his previous, well-intentioned efforts find no place in that. Then the course of dealing, often referred to, is gone through. I only note here the strong expression of the difference of Luke xxi and Matthew xxiv. The enquiry (verse 7) is only, "When shall these things be?" And in opposition to "Immediately after the tribulation," you have "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until;" then the then suited warnings come. In chap. xxii, note how many moral questions connected with the facts arise, as verses 23—28, and how the subsequent setting up of the Kingdom is avoided in verse 13, etc. Other things more briefly and generally, as Peter's denial, the visit of the women to the sepulchre, Herod brought in, Jesus definitely and briefly condemned on His own testimony only (xxiii, 24). It is the Jews' act. Full details of the Cross, and the thief, as of the character of Gethsemane, and of Joseph and Nicodemus, and full details on the way to Emmaus, in contrast with the then kingdom, and in the history of the new heavenly character, Christ to suffer, and then Jew first, and then Gentile, but all needing salvation. The Scriptures get a distinct place, and a true, risen man, the same as one they had known. Other points largely noticed elsewhere.

—21. What a word was this! Not a general exposition of sense. It demanded instant faith, or produced the anger of unbelief. But though all bare Him witness, and

saw the power of grace shining forth in Him, they were unchanged to know the voice—He was the Son of Joseph, one of them.

The greatest grace of all, the most distinct manifestation of the Saviour, passes as the wind by ordinary associations until the Lord call by His spirit. But it is worthy of remark how these people felt and acted under the irresistible testimony which accompanied Jesus. It is one peculiar exhibition of unbelief—"They bore witness . . . . they wondered . . . . they said." They expected the same manifestation, above all places at home, of that of which they had heard in places where He was a Stranger, but they were unconscious that the manifestation of Divine power was dependent morally on faith, and when He was known as "The Son of Joseph" they could not receive Him in the power of His coming, and "He could not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief." It is upon this principle He reasons, shewing it was their fault, and that often thus assumed privilege put farther from grace which made them so angry, and that it was thus really often confined to the despised and reprobate stranger. The whole, duly weighed, is a very interesting and instructive picture of unbelief thus working. And, note, He presented Himself here to them not in general miraculous testimony, but in Person, offering Himself to them in gracious personality, suitable and graciously adapted to their situation, but "No prophet," etc. It is interesting too to observe our Lord's mind turning upon itself in testimony against them, "But of a truth I say to you."

Then the Lord exercises His manifested power, as so come as Man, first against Satan's immediate possession of a

power over man ; then the effects of evil in a violent disease ; then as against all manner of sickness, and devils going out of many, as it is expressed by the Apostle in the record of this Evangelist: "How God anointed" . . . "Jesus of Nazareth" . . . "with the Holy Ghost and with power ; who went about doing good, and healing all that were under the power of the devil, because God was with Him." The devils said: "Thou art the Son of God," for they knew that He was the Anointed. They had no Divine knowledge that He was the Son of God. It was conclusion from His work and way as the Anointed, as full of the Holy Ghost, the Holy One of God.

—37. But the rumour, though just, is not belief in His Person, nor in His word. I do not know anything more sad or afflicting than to see the Son of God in a lost and alienated world, admiring, testifying to the grace which shewed itself in Him, His fame spread abroad on every side so that multitudes were ever waiting on Him, but ignorant of His Person, and unconverted by His word, nay, at last getting rid of Him that they might have it their own way. How much we sometimes see of this ! He however knew wherefore He had come, and patiently did His Father's will, while it was called "To-day."

Note, our Lord's fame in public made Him nothing the less humble, and attentive to the merest human necessity. In Him, indeed it could not, for human honour was nothing, but it affords an example to us, and the unchanging attention of His kindness, interesting itself in the necessity of each, is strongly exhibited in what follows. It were as easy to Him to have spoken a word, healed, and dismissed them all—a greater apparent display of His power, but God's

power to us is Love. "And now, I beseech Thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as Thou hast spoken."

—40, 41. "And having laid His hands on everyone of them, He healed them." Satan, when he could not oppose, and constrained to recognize the actual power as of the Son of God and His Kingdom, would have share, nay, take the lead in recognizing it, that it might be accredited by him, and so he retain his paramount influence as far as possible over the minds of men, and credit, and station in the world, and make God as it were a debtor to him for his sanction in it. So with Paul at Philippi, but not so the Spirit of God; He works His own Holy purpose, and separates, by the reception or rejection of His own testimony, those who love or hate the light. And it is only in presenting Christ in this moral character of trial that His work is truly wrought. The spirits knew it, and the master spirit would have made use of this knowledge to minister subtle hindrance to the Lord's Kingdom, and maintain, as we have seen, his influence over the blinded heart of man, but the Lord "suffered them not to speak."

We may also remark, as regards ourselves, how the Lord was never drawn aside to His own glory, though He indeed might. Note also, Satan appears to know, though with undistracted power of apprehension, as we know, merely as a creature, though a more exalted one by evidence.

But, though the testimony afforded to His glory was thus very great, Jesus, thus led of the Spirit, was seeking the good of poor sinners, showing mercy in power for that, not using it for His glory, nor waiting to enjoy its effects for Himself, but went on to the testimony of God's Kingdom which it verified and proved in mercy amongst men, thus

connecting man's blessing and the Kingdom of God. His main object to testify of the other threw its light on this—in man's poor withered heart. Nothing can be more beautiful than the perfection of this. Lord, give us of this heavenly Spirit, the Spirit of Thy blessed Son here below! If, when the effect of these mercies was fresh and strong on the hearts of men, the Lord says: "I must preach the Kingdom of God to other cities also; for therefore am I sent," it identified the blessings not with favour to Him, but with the Kingdom of God and Him who sent Him. It was love to poor men, drawing their hearts from the pit, where they were lying, to the coming of mercy, and delivering power in the Kingdom of God. Here this part of the testimony therefore closes.

—43. Still the same stedfastness of purpose, *quod nota*, here, for there was much to detain Him humanly in this request. This is of great importance in labour, both as to our own mind and the fulfilment of the work. Nothing would have been added here really to the work, indeed it was the result of what was passed; they wished to keep Him because He had—not an awakened desire as to what was to come. It is a spirit of diligent service. The petition for the Lord to stay, looking at the Lord Jesus here as our Pattern in service, was evidence that He might go away.

—44. "He preached in their synagogues," also to the multitude when they came to hear the word of God.

I think there is something very affecting to go through the various patience of our Lord's perfect ministry. I love to bring Him before my mind thus, as well as in His supreme glory and exaltation. And we know Him better by it, as Luke vividly presents Him to us in subjection to all the

ordinary infirmities of our fallen nature—the same circumstances in which we are conversant, the same resources putting His trust in God while His soul knew all, even as God, the necessities which surrounded, and was filled with the thoughts, and bore the weight of all that sin had introduced and love would remove—knew it indeed perfectly as God, but knew it also Himself as Man. I cannot sufficiently contemplate the Lord thus humbling Himself, and ministering the very glory of God, and yet the Servant of all men. Oh, for a heart to follow His steps! I see the Lord, His glory and Person, shining in everything, in the midst of unbelief which surrounded and understood nothing of it, yet is given to His people.

Chapter V.

In this chapter we have gathering by the display of Himself, and man's sinfulness, fear being taken away by grace. Then Jehovah, goodness in Man. Jehovah alone healed the lepers, but here He touched the leper—which would have defiled another. This is God, manifest, too, in grace in life. In the paralytic, He takes up Psalm ciii, but here it is not goodness but forgiveness brought down to earth as a present thing in Man, and proved by power. The two great parts of Christ's coming—what He was in life, and what He obtained for us by death—but here according to the place He was then in. In what follows He shows He calls sinners, but the new wine cannot be put into old bottles. As far as it went, it was so in what preceded. It was grace, but grace must form its own framework. Withal

He is the consciously dependent Man, verse 16. In chap. iv, after binding the strong man, He visits His people in grace, but to be rejected, but shows His power over Satan, and the disease, and misery of man; not coming to have a following but to serve. In chap. vi, the Sabbath question is raised. The whole is a very distinct picture of what the Lord was on earth, but still within the precincts of Judaism, but showing it could not be so, as chap. iv, 24-28, and chap. v, 36-39. Divine power in Man in goodness could not be restricted to it. That, and what the Divine power was, is the main point here. The Sabbath, or seal of the old Covenant, could not stand in the way of it, *i.e.*, of God in goodness towards man; the Son of Man was Lord of it. God judged of things, and must as manifest in flesh, according to goodness. The whole portion of iv, v and beginning of vi, is very instructive in this point of view.

The instructions that follow connect themselves with this position of His disciples, *i.e.*, with the position made for them by these principles, *i.e.*, in the end of chap. vi, He gathers disciples in contrast with the nation. The first two chapters show the lovely picture of the Remnant, and how God could visit and keep them for Himself, when Satan ruled on high, but it was not yet Himself. The Holy Ghost was working in them, and in Divine affections, but from chap. iv it is Himself. We find indeed the Lord Himself wonderfully revealed to man in chap ii, but it is simply as an Object, not as Himself acting and presenting Himself in the power of the Spirit to men. His mission is spoken of by others and His Person revealed, and knowing that His relationship with the Father was not for Himself from the Spirit given to Him, but in His Person, though He acted by the Spirit

that we as men might have all the benefit of it. He is ministerially in the midst of Israel to chap. vi, though in a character which cannot be confined to it. Chap. vii takes Him to other ground—a Gentile with more faith than in Israel, so that faith is blessed wherever it may be. He and John Baptist are rejected, and the vilest sinner goes saved and in peace through faith. Then the Sower. Remark here how differently this is introduced in Matthew. Here, it is Christ acting in grace, but justified only by the children of wisdom, and acting on a principle which must go beyond Jews, though "To the Jews first." He is Son of Man in grace. This, which the nation cannot own, but He sows and will reap. In Matthew, where He presents Himself formally to Israel as Jehovah the Fulfiller of promise, it is the full rejection and condemnation of Israel (chap xii, 41, to the end) which gives occasion to the Sower. Here it is grace which Israel indeed will not have, but which then widens out to any sinners, and which, even in Israel was of a character which could not be confined to it.

—5. We may observe the mixture of unbelief and faith shown in this answer of Peter's, and how truly real it is "the Lord accepts such." Obedience of action leads to apprehension of glory, apprehension of glory to the full mind of repentance. This is met by gracious assurance, and forms the introduction into the Lord's service.

It is a wonderful thing to consider the Lord's unknown passage through the world, considering who He was, all the multitudes being drawn to Him by the miracles which He did.

"At Thy word." This was long after Peter had known the Lord, but antecedent to his being called to follow Him

separately as a disciple. He "abode with Him that day" was all when they followed Him from John; John was now cast into prison.

—8. This also gives a vivid picture of the effect of the revelation of the Lord's glory, the conviction of the impropriety of the Lord's having anything to say to us, of the incompatibility of our state with His presence, and yet attracted to Him. Note, too, as to circumstance, this was after the attraction of Peter to the Lord; it was the effect of the revelation of glory on the conscience.

Grace acting sovereignly in the deep to gather where man could toil all night and find none—the ground on which a sinner, confessedly so, was called to be a fisherman, is very distinctly marked in this passage. It was not merely what Jesus was, and presented Himself as, and did, but choice, work on conscience, and mission. His own Person, as filled with the Spirit, and the principles of God's dealings in grace, had been brought forward hitherto; now, His acting, the full time being come, and this proposed, on these principles. That had been to Israel, but still what Israel really needed as sinners—sovereign grace. This also includes the power and competency of the present operations and effectual workings of grace in Him. Yet, however, Jesus might present Himself as a Man, glorifying His Father, when He acted with sovereign title and competency as Jehovah really, He hides it and Himself, for this was not the point He sought as Man, but His glory that sent Him. "See thou tell no man," and He was retiring in the deserts and praying. The testimony was really the greater. It is beautiful to see the Divine nature thus breaking through the Manhood when grace demanded

it, and, we may add, faith, for He was without honour as in His own country as a Prophet, but individual faith called out all His Divine grace and power. I will (θέλω) is righteously only Jehovah's power, yet clearly a word of pure graciousness, willingness, as well as His goodwill. It was the doubtful point; power was manifest, but was the powerful One, God the Almighty (for so really it was) willing to have to do with the unclean? The answer was, He was—to make clean.

8—11. We may note here the operation of the breaking in of light upon an ardent and now awakened mind. The fact does not lead merely to itself but to Jesus, and judgment of one's self thereby. We may note its particular characters, immediate recurrence to Jesus in confession, with the sense of the impossibility of having a part with Him, from the new apprehension of our own sinfulness brought by the shining in of the only true Criterion of Divine glory, but primarily rather in the power of Divine glory than in the plentitude of Divine grace. Yet was it not peace nor rest as to Himself, nay, left there it would have been misery, or sunk back into carelessness. Astonishment (θάμβος) had taken hold on him and them. The peace was a further revelation of Christ, yet the other was such a manifestation of Christ in glory in contrast with his own state as led him to Him where he found peace.

Such then is the first ministration. Christ is a Saviour. The revelation of the Divine glory in Him is the great instrument of awakening souls to come to Him. The suitableness of the method must be obvious; the way in which it operates may be here learned, but need not be commented on. But note the operation is by grace,

different on Peter and the rest, and so distinguished by the Lord. Note also the necessary result is leaving all, and following Jesus thus known, *quod nota;* no difference in this. The peculiar operation on Peter, and what it was as distinguished from others, as connected with special place and suitableness for service in the Church, may be adverted to, and the Lord's address to him holds out a light to us as to this. We may note special apprehension of the glory, peculiarly deep convictions of sin, and a peculiar testimony, and moral designation by the Lord thereupon, and arising out of it as to occasion of its manifestation. For, indeed, it is upon this we preach, and only according to this in power, *i.e.*, conviction and belief, for thus the testimony operates, *i.e.*, upon us as subjects. It is not in power in man a mere abstract apprehension, but something in which he is himself vitally concerned—as to its general moral character and operation, it is as to all alike—no man follows Jesus rightly who does not leave all, nor, in the nature of things, can any leave all, though he may one for another, except for the Lord Jesus, and by His constraining power.

Thus the Lord knows those whom He has chosen.

The circumstances of this account, compared with John xxi, and Peter, are that there are moral truths and mysteries or prophetic revelations contained in them; particularly the account in John xxi is to be weighed in all its bearings. There seems to be, in some particulars, a careful opposition between them, while many of the ulterior circumstances in John, I am led to think, are of vast importance. That this relates typically to ministry is certain; that there was in it the exercise of a much more obscure faith is also plain. The total failure without the Lord is also here strongly

marked; the results also are accordant; both the net brake and the ships were sinking. Note also, they, having filled their ships with them, left the ships with no further to say to the fishes; both their ships were filled, they having called the assistance of their partners.

—12. Our Lord now begins to show in detail the effectual operation of grace (in Him as come of God, being indeed God manifest in the flesh) as to the necessities of repudiated man. Grace had been shown. This had drawn out the exercise of hope in those whom the law of righteousness had righteously cast out. "A man full of leprosy" was clear as to the power of Jesus; he had seen its efficacy and believed it. The point was grace, *i.e.*, in this case, willingness to do it on his need and request. Divine power we know alone did this; the priest was merely witness. Grace, however, was the great point, and this brought near in Man—manifest in the flesh, for grace is God's prerogative, Divine prerogative clearly, let it be in man or where it may, for "Who can forgive?" But this was shown in the effectual word: "I will, be thou clean." He came to exercise power, to save. That was what God was, for in Him He was to be learnt in way and character, and yet in all the grace and nearness of Man bringing the comfort of restoring sympathising love—sympathy with him in his evil though not partaking of it. "He touched him, saying, I will;" these two words convey all. It was that which drew nigh and touched the evil in others, did not the least shrink (as in law men were bound to do) from it, but touch it to dispel, not receive its sorrow and defilement. It was in Man, and as Man He did this properly and wholly, and yet He could say: "I will," for He ever answers the faith of man, though

He may hide His glory, and reveal His Father's. But here it was human grace and Divine power unfolding itself, in the efficacy of the Person of Jesus, to the hopeless need and sorrow of man. Still, as we have seen, He was not propagating but hiding His own glory, though indeed it could not be hid, for there was a boundless heart in Him to do good, and power to help: "The report concerning Him was spread abroad still more." It was a glorious testimony to Divine intervention and supremacy, that God was come in humbleness to help, for touching was a supreme act of love. But He desires him to go and offer, hiding Himself, but thereby showing it Divine and He had done it, and He was a Man. Many were attracted, but He retired into the wilderness and was praying, casting Himself as Man upon God, *i.e.*, the Father, *quod nota*, for He never departs from this character here, let what would of Divine power be disclosed. And this was just the blessed and unspeakable mystery.

—13, 14. His Divine nature, and its acknowledgment by implicit faith is, I think, strongly manifested here. It is sad to the believer to speak of proofs, yet the Lord has condescended to give them, and at least to condemn men by them, that they might have no cloak for their sin. We are too accustomed to read of these things.

So ever as unknown and yet well known, the manifestations of Divine power in us in works done in secret (I am not speaking here merely of individual grace) are often the most effectual testimonies to that glory in the world, and it is marked perhaps by the same unwillingness to be the objects of it ourselves. We speak, even here, of Jesus as a Pattern to us. Nay! I am persuaded there is more

opportunity for a full display of the Divine glory in us thus privately, where our souls may find vent through the faith of a humble and seeking soul than in other cases, according to the faith and grace that is in us. It supposes too, observe, a disposition to yield oneself in love to the despised necessities of the outcast poor, and to value that more than a manifestation of anything that is in us. Of such Spirit was the Lord of all glory, power and might. The circumstances have been often observed upon. The conduct and word is of Him who said: "I will; be thou clean." Who was this? How does the Divine Lord shine through every action of His life! We shall do well also to compare this and the preceding account. Note also much His conduct when the rumour of Him did spread.

—16. "And He withdrew Himself, and was about in the desert [places] a praying." Oh, for this Spirit of holy purpose in every measure! Man would say He ought to come forward, but He indeed kept thus close to His work in perfectness of purpose, and, while intent upon the necessities of men, indifferent at their interest in Him, as to the purpose of His own soul. This separation in purpose is very singularly marked all through our Lord's life, as is its calmness. It was indeed suitable to His present work that He should rest it distinctly upon moral discovery, and not otherwise make Himself known.

—17. "I say, Have they not heard?" For the Jews would have made Him a King upon their own grounds, but He must be received as the Son of Man or not at all. We have in this verse evidence how in this Gospel events are morally brought together. As before we had cleansing grace drawn near to defilement, so here we have complete

forgiveness demonstrated to power. "The power of the Lord was present to heal." Both these circumstances were Jewish in form and referred to the presence of the Son of Man upon earth, the incarnate Jehovah, but showing that the power had drawn near in Man. This refers to Psalm ciii, Jehovah's dealings praised by Messiah. The former to the law of leprosy. They were strict teachers of the law, but power was present, the power of the Lord; still He presents Himself as Son of Man.

—20. Faith sometimes shows itself in disregard of circumstances, not being turned aside by their apparent necessity, because the mind is fuller of the necessity of the other. The forgiveness is brought now, to wit, to His people, and by faith, for the body and the world are not yet manifested to be redeemed, though known to be so by the believer. Accordingly herein the supremacy of God is known, to wit, His necessary dominion, namely by the forgiveness of sins on the earth (ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς) through faith by grace. And herein, too, observe, acknowledged; therefore he says to obedience of faith, and the like, and that in Christ Jesus.

Note also it brings the remedy where the ruin was overreaching it, by the supremacy of God through faith, and prevailing against the enemy where he had prevailed, and casting him out, *quod nota.*

—21. Note also the strange foolishness of man.

—22. Does "knowing" (ἐπιγνοὺς) imply Divine perception of, or when He knew *i.e.*, in this instance? "In your hearts" seems to imply the former, and that in asking the question He gave the most convincing proof of the Divinity they were questioning.

God's forgiveness on earth is precisely what is made

known in Christ, and is applied to everyone on his reception into His Body the Church by faith. As to the ministrations of this grace (whether baptism or the prayer of faith mentioned by James and John) I would observe on the nature and purpose of the Christian ordinances. It is to keep the doctrine of forgiveness by faith distinct and unimpeachable—it is not only given but made known in Christ, "To declare, I say," and again, "Be it known unto you," and is the ministration of effectual and possessed peace. It is of present power and ministration. "The Son of Man hath power on earth." God has it in that He is God. If we know there is God, we know that He has power to forgive sins, but the other is matter of faith and revelation, and "That ye may know," and declaration, as we have seen, and in which the point of the Gospel and Christian faith, as to dispensation, begins; Compare Acts xiii, 38, 39. Apparently, and *in se* according to the inductive right judgment of men, as Son of Man He has no such power. It is a thing which rests either on the knowledge of His office as revealed in His Person as connected with the prominent facts of the Gospel, or else evidenced by an adequate exhibition of power which, by the word of truth, we can recognize as of God, connected with the exercise of the assumed power, and this is indeed but testimonial of the other unknown in an external way to the thoughts of men, and rightly commanding his inductive judgment: "Believe me that I am, or else believe me," &c. Is there then any exercise of this power? We say: Always in the Name of the Son of God preached according to faith, and the calling of God to minister that word as Acts xiii, 38, 39, and this is the primary article of faith in

the dispensation of the grace of the Gospel or Christianity in testifying to the Son of Man as to personal power, merely dependent on the power of discriminating absolutely them that believe on Him, that manifest themselves to be sanctified out of the world by faith that is in Him, according to the gift of God in anyone, and exercisable only when Church order is practicable. And in as much as we judge justly that it is not of man, and none have it by eternal mediation as Christ had witnessed, only by testimony suitable to the claim, as Christ Himself afforded it as justly necessary, *i.e.*, given to the weakness of man, who could not see the brightness of His Person, and conclusive against mistake on so important a point: "If I had not done among them" (although they ought to have known His Person) "the works which none other man did, they had not had sin, but now have they," &c, "sin because they believe not on me." But in as much as it rests by (in that He is indeed the Heir of the world) office in Him, those who may be entrusted with this power for the purposes of gathering souls out of the world, have it only to the ministration of His glory, and can only minister it to faith in His Name, and in His Name, and the doing it otherwise at once evidences that it is false, and the highest of all sins against God, resulting in denial of forgiveness at all, and thus upsetting the very instrument by which souls are gathered out of this world to the Father. Accordingly the Apostles were entrusted with this as not an intrinsic, as in Him, but a deposited power, exercisable according to the measure given to them, to wit, of an Apostle: "As my Father sent me, even so send I you." We say that the doctrine they taught they could select

faithful men to minister in, but the Apostles themselves could have no power of sending others with the same authority, for it must flow from One who had it intrinsically or by office. They had it by gift as deputed; they could pray, and lay hands on believers that they might receive, but they could not breathe and say "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." God may give it afresh to whomsoever He will but in order to its exercise he must approve himself possessed of it as Christ Himself did, and His Apostles, and he must receive it immediately from God as they did. So the ground of peace lessened not at all, for the testimony of Christ is unchangeable, which, *i.e.*, on the footing of which and faith in it, they themselves exercised it, and it is merely evidence of the truth of that doctrine when sent. On the whole, it rests in faith in the Person of the Son of Man, being founded absolutely in the Person of the Son of God communicated solely in Him, and therefore communicable only by and to faith in His name; and unbelief in this barred an Apostle, nay, Christ Himself in the flesh (Matthew xiii, 58) from the exercise of His office. And that Name it turns about as its centre, and all the ministration of it is ordered accordingly, and that which is otherwise is but vain delusion, for this is the connecting ordinance of God to Himself, to wit, forgiveness of sins in Christ Jesus. And here one main deceit of falsehood lies. God, by forgiveness, wins the soul to guilelessness and confession, and towards Him who alone can reach and satisfy the conscience, and try the reins and the heart so as to convert them to holiness, for He is the only end of holiness, and, through forgiveness, brought very near to us in Jesus Christ, God becomes the Object of the soul in a way a sinner can

receive Him with his whole heart, and love Him with his whole heart because he is a sinner. In a word, in Christ Jesus, God is manifested to the sinner as the absorbing Object of his soul in the way of grace and holiness now favourable towards him. On this hinge of forgiveness in Christ turns the whole restoration of the soul to God, even the God of love, who is Love, and so only can be justly known, or could the sinner receive as such; see Psalm xxxii. and cxxxix. But in any other forgiveness, other than in Christ's Name, the conscience is not searched to the bottom, the heart is not consequently restored to God, nor purged, nor purified, but the sinner left precisely where he was or worse, by the supposed healing of his conscience.

The doctrine of the restoration of the soul to God by absolute personal forgiveness, the covenant of infinite grace applied to sin, and making God known to the sinner in Jesus Christ is indeed the great all-important truth. The sinner cannot know God otherwise, for there is a breach between him and God, and while sin remains, one and all, upon his conscience he cannot know love, nor have communion with Him; he needs reconciliation, and this is given so as to set up God in holy love again to his soul by grace when it comes from Himself. Therefore, "How much more shall the blood of Christ who," &c. "purge your conscience . . . to serve," &c. But it is not in philosophical views of these things that their power rests, but in the plain truths of it. In conclusion, that which is here is the evidence of the Person of Jesus Christ, and this is the hinge on which the whole force of the passage rests, and the more its force, bearings and consequences be

examined, the more will the truth of this appear, and its weight be found. This testified of it, and all ministrations of forgiveness are but of this, and when this is known as revealed, the other is possessed as declared in that. "Forgiveness of sins" was to "be preached in His Name," so the commission runs, "beginning" &c. The seal of it was by discriminating ministration; and, note, this keeps the soul of the minister of it also in its right place of dependence.

There is another point of great interest which I had not before noticed in Luke. After His baptism and temptation taking His place as Man (second Adam) and victory over Satan, instead of failing like the first, Christ begins by presenting Himself as the Fulfiller or Fulfilment of promise in grace, but looks for rejection as Joseph's Son (grace went beyond Israel and brought out their enmity) and proves His power, so that the demons own Him to be that One promised to Israel, as in Psalm lxxxix, of the *chasadim* (mercies) of the Lord. "Thou spakest in vision of Thy Holy One (*chasid*). I have laid help on Him that is mighty. I have exalted One chosen out of the people." So all the evils Satan has inflicted on man disappear before His word, and hereon He is recognized in two other parts of His Jewish titles and name—Son of God and the Christ, as in Psalm ii, and He preaches the Kingdom of God. But He must preach the word of God, not remain for mere earthly comfort of man, nor His own. In chap. v, He convicts of sin by revealing Himself to the conscience as the Lord, but removes fear, and gathers round Himself. We have not the fulfilment of promise and the Holy One, but a Divine Person, and One revealing Himself as such and bringing in

new things in grace. He acts as Jehovah to the leper, yet comes nearer than man could by right—He touched him; others were defiled thus. He came touching man in sin, but driving away the defilement. So He forgives sins, and proves His Jehovah title to do so, according to Psalm ciii.

Here then He is not the Holy One of God, but a Divine Person. So He calls in grace Himself, does not merely recite the history of Naaman and the woman of Sarepta. They are offended at Divine grace, and the question is raised as to the old way. They could not mourn with the Bridegroom there; He would be taken away before the wedding, then they would. But there was more than this—new wine could not be put in old bottles, and no one having drank old straightway desires new. He announces that the Divine display of grace could not be put into the old Jewish system; and they would not have it. Before they reject when He is there as Man, only, by Divine protection and as a Divine Person, He passes through them; here when He has acted as a Divine Person, He tells what must take place. Then follows the Sabbath, the seal of their covenant, but He Lord of it, and that as Son of man and according to grace.

Thus chap. iv is the Holy One, fulfilment of promises (He who is the Man-overcomer of Satan). In chap. v He is Jehovah, but present in grace as Man, and, because Jehovah, untouched by defilement, touching in grace the defilement of man. *i.e.*, in others; but shows then His dependence as Man—He withdrew Himself into the wilderness and prayed. Hence what was simply Jehovah convincing of sin, and cleansing, now comes out as the power of the Son of Man, for from verse 17. it is forgiveness and grace to sinners in

the hands of the Son of Man. Thus we have had the Prophets and Psalms fulfilled, Jehovah present in grace, the Son of Man with power on earth to forgive sins—all in this Divine Person, Jehovah present in Manhood, the Word made flesh, the Son of God.

The notice of the Sabbath connects itself with the last part. It was the seal of the Covenant, the very mark of God's people. What place would it hold in respect of this Person, now thus coming in? There seem to me three principles introduced connected with it. At the time the Jews were allowed to eat the corn, the first fruits having been offered, the disciples, the very first Sabbath day, I apprehend, after it was allowed, rub the corn and eat it owning the new blessing. The Lord's answer is, I apprehend, this, The rejected Son of David is as free as the rejected David. He whom God owns is cast out, and grace is free. Next, He declares the Son of Man, His full and larger title when rejected, to be the Lord of the Sabbath—an immensely important point. Thirdly, God is free, grace is free to do good on the Sabbath or any day; His nature is above His imposed rest. This He asserts, in spite of Pharisees. Blessed be God, it is so!

What follows shows the disciples separated out to Himself from the nation, so that really all is settled. It does not give principles merely, showing what kind of persons can have the Kingdom, but addresses the disciples as those to whom it belongs. It was however the time of sorrow as to it, for as fulfilling the promises He was rejected, the tribulation and patience of the Kingdom, but woe to those at ease, for judgment was coming. This as to promises and the Kingdom. But further as to those who heard, they

were to imitate God in His ways of grace, they were to be children of the Highest. The Jewish leaders were only the blind leading the blind into the ditch, and personal purification, not moralising for others, was alone truth of heart, and hearing Christ, even among them indeed, was only delusion without obedience. This, therefore, was more an epoch than the Sermon on the Mount, not that I count it different, but what the Holy Ghost there presents to the nation as principles, is here spoken of as actually distinguishing the disciples, and the double character of promise, and the manifestation of God in grace is distinctly brought out. The Remnant are called. Hence we have not "Agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way," though that was yet true. But the distinction is morally made.

A little more precision as to chapter iv—vi. He comes as fulfilling prophecy in grace, is rejected by man, the devils own Him as the Holy One of God (the *chasid* of Ps. lxxxix) the Christ, the Son of God, of Psalm ii, but He does not receive their testimony. He reveals God in reaching conscience, cleansing the leper, forgiving sins, calling sinners in grace. But this new wine cannot be put into old bottles. Of these old bottles of Judaism, the Sabbath was the keystone, *i.e.*, rest connected with law in creation. He meets the accusation of breaking it by the liberty of the seed of promise whom God owned when rejected (David and the shewbread) He was the rejected Christ. Being such, He takes the place of the Son of Man, as everywhere, but as such He is Lord of the Sabbath. Thirdly, Divine goodness would act for itself in grace in the midst of misery, and not be confined by legal hindrance, and a yoke of bondage. Thus

all the characters of Christ as here revealed are brought into the question. But then note that the rejection by man through selfwill, when the devils owned Him, does not hinder His developing, in chapter v, His Divine title of doing good. He goes on to this, only He shows this new wine must be put into new bottles, but this does not hinder His carrying it out, only it cannot be, from the nature of things, in Judaism; nor do the strongest sanctions of law, as a system of ordinances, bar grace.

No circumstance or situation in which the Lord speaking ministerially does not detect and call out grace, *i.e.*, call out His own more strictly! So the Gospel in the power of the Spirit.

—26. Here was the great basis laid of Jehovah-power come in in grace, and that in Man. "They glorified God," but it is not said they owned Him; they had seen paradoxes in such assertion of forgiveness and title in a Man, and power proving it, and this was to be developed. Jews not learned, and Galileans the Lord had already called to be His companions. Having proved the Divine authority of grace in Man so come amongst them, He was now to call and become the Companion of publicans. The two points noticed were of great importance, as the supreme exercise of Jehovah-power in Man—thus prerogatively in real manifestation of His Person, rising over Israel's ruin, because the leprosy was cleansed, and the sins forgiven, and the man healed. One showing the supreme power of Jehovah in mercy as to evil amongst them, and the other the accomplishment of latter day, Jehovah-forgiving, blessings, as in Psalm ciii, restoring the full blessing of the nation after their sinful state. This was clearly pre-

rogative mercy, but amongst Jews, and applying to them. It was mercy come amongst them as Man feeling all the evil but in power. Thence it reaches on to those who did not come within what a Jew would recognise of prerogative to a Jew; it might go to a Gentile. Having asserted these two great prerogative mercies which, identifying the Lord with the Jehovah of Israel, whatever His humiliation and service, as Man, might be—mercies connected with grace to Israel in its helpless defilement which Jehovah alone could remove, and the spotless Saviour alone approach to, and approach, too, undefilable and forgiving all—He passes on to the power of this in receiving rejected outcasts according to the graciousness of His own prerogative. He called Levi, and sat down to eat with a multitude of publicans and others. It was bad company —company for Messiah, and one who had a character— the Scribes and Pharisees murmured; this not to Jesus in enquiry, but to His disciples as slurring Him. Why did He eat with publicans and sinners? But the Lord's eye caught their complaints. What does His eye slight, or not see for His disciples? The answer was the answer of simple grace: "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. I am not come to call the righteous but sinners." The Lord then added the joy of the disciples by His being there. The Bridegroom was with them. Faith could not act on the ignorance, no more than grace on the dark selfish self-righteousness of the Pharisee. But a change was further about to take place. They could not then act on the Jews' darkness, but soon the Bridegroom would be gone, and then they would have occasion to feel thus the form of the dispensation which

would be altered. The power of the new life, and the Spirit of Christ flowing from His resurrection, and manifesting His exaltation in glory could not be put in the old bottles of Jewish forms. It was not then merely that supreme grace had been manifested amongst Jews, but that this grace, coming forth in the power of the exalted Saviour, was incompatible with the character and contractedness of old Jewish forms and habits. These were the two things—supreme grace, and then the vessel that was to contain it. The latter was a parable as yet, the time was not yet full come. It was not expected that those accustomed to the old would like the new. Still power, the new wine and the new cloth were in it. Thus far, from the case of the leper, the operation of the principles of grace for man and in the dispensation, are brought out, but the last part necessarily brought out the signs of Covenant associations, and into this then in this Gospel the Spirit next conducts us. The whole of this is a touching development of the position in which all these parties stood.

—32. Note also our Lord was just now entering on His ministry, or however we have Him thus exhibited by Luke, and the observations of the people on it, for He had now begun to have disciples of whom He was looked upon, as here, as a sort of leader.

Note then accordingly, in chap. iv, 14, we are given the full announcement of His Person and mission, with the accompanying exhibition of its acceptance in the world, and the declaration of the election of grace as against the presumptuous claim of men, together with the judgment and supremacy of God, and the anger of man at it, showing only his wicked opposition to God. I think also there are

other typical hints in that place on which we need not enter here. Chap. iv, 31—44, the general manifestation of His power over Satan; chap. v. to verse 11, His connecting glory, and receiving disciples thereby. In the account of the leper we have Him who could touch sin so as to put it away, being undefiled and separate from sinners, His healing sinners, and more largely His authoritative power in forgiveness, against all question, in what follows. Then here, we have opened to them that have understanding, the moral character and ministration of His mission; I mean down to verse 39. These are but hints which may be opened in reading the passages, and doubtless much more.

Chapter VI.

—1. "On the second first Sabbath" (σαββάτῳ δευτεροπρώτῳ) *i.e.* just after the beginning of first fruits, *i.e.* of corn, to wit, first day of unleavened bread.

If the above statement be correct, there would be, I think, allusion in the particular Sabbath; at any rate it was the corn freshly ripe. It was in them a passing act, no labour of gathering, but the Lord's reply has, in the reference to David, a great deal of bearing on the circumstances. David was the king raised up in grace, but hidden and an outcast, and grace acts on the will of God in mercy to it; if the king be reduced to such a condition, the shew-bread, and order of God's house is, in a manner, common. The Lord accordingly asserts in

that His title over the Sabbath. "The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath." This was an important point. The Son of Man forgave sins, and touched the leper, and by His will cleansed him. Thus grace was introduced. If, on the now avowed impossibility of putting new cloth on an old garment, Pharisees found fault with liberty, while Israel's rejection of its King made its own restoration privileges common, the Son of Man must declare His title as such as paramount to the obligation in its original force. Their failure and His title as Son of Man concurred in opening the door for grace, and breaking down the restriction that had confined privilege to themselves. Such the double force, in its principle put, of this passage. If the twelve loaves of shew-bread were the expression of the Lord's association with Israel, the force of the allusion would be stronger still. At any rate, David was king in grace, on the failure of Israel; see Ps. lxxviii, and was then outcast, as Jesus was. The second point takes even a higher ground; the "those with him," beautifully brings in grace, associating them with Him. The next case, as the healing the man whose forgiveness He had pronounced, introduces the grand evidence of Divine beneficent power proving His title, and forcing them, if they would not own it, to oppose God's working in grace. God had not a Sabbath while sin and where sin and sorrow were, nor did He come to this earth to find or to have a Sabbath here, nor to make one, but by the redemption which gave it in another life. Here it was giving power where withered, not finding rest where there was ruin. This grace, as they could not gainsay (and it mortified their pride, proving their impotency) they opposed, and were

mad at. This was the result of grace in Divine power passing over every obstacle, manifested before them, and this closed this immediate division of the account.

—4. A saint is not an instance of laxity of conduct in breaking through principles, but his conduct being of faith may shew a principle which may have been covered, under any given rite, from circumstances.

—6. Illustrative of the way in which Luke brings things together by subjects, showing what was the main subject matter. Note this subject of the Sabbath was circumstantially worthy of a distinct place, for it had become a pledge of the separating covenant; it is manifest to me that the Lord dissolves its obligation, not its object. If a man be not under grace, I do not say but he may be obliged by the Sabbath, but so also by the whole law, and should be circumcised. But the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath, and it is lawful to do good on it, and I do not know what else it is lawful for a Christian to do at any time. Indeed, it seems to me to weaken the results of Christ's resurrection, to suppose that the Gentile Church is subject to the Jewish Sabbath; however let a man be fully persuaded in his own mind, and consider him who might be led into sin by it. It is of the old things, and men like them, and they are connected here in consequence, however excellent the object.

—10. The Lord gave them no occasion of cavilling, for He neither did anything Himself, nor did the other but stretch forth his hand, and shewing His power and mission to save, without giving them even handle to accuse. They were filled with distraction of mind. And it was done very publicly, and drawing expressly the attention of

all, and He looking around on them all so as to fix their attention on Himself.

—12. *et seq.* The Lord having taken this place and had disciples with Him in His manifestation of it, now associates others with Him in the testimony of it. But here again we see the Lord setting about it, whatever His authority, as an independent Man as to men—a dependent Man as to God. He was all night in prayer to God, so I take it, and afterwards, when the day came, called His disciples, and having chosen, &c. How blessed and most gracious is this expression in the Lord, of dependence, and reference to His Father! It is most lovely. There is nothing puts the Lord in such a place of gracious leading to us, for I speak not of atonement here.

The principles of our Lord's own mission having been exhibited, we find others then chosen to be witnesses of it. I speak of course of the Gospel. Christ named them "Apostles." Their character was definitely assigned them, as sent out from Him; they had been companions with Him.

Are not "having chosen" (ἐκλεξάμενος) and "descending" (καταβὰς) dependent on "He stood" (ἔστη) as the only verb of the sentence? We have now not Jesus teaching in the synagogue and grace, and the setting aside of the old covenant system alluded to, but the multitudes coming to Jesus when He has assumed the prerogative, still as Man, but the Lord of sending out missionaries from Himself as the Centre-Power shewn towards them all so coming, and then the principles in which He viewed the world, morally communicated to His disciples in the audience of the people.

There is difference in Matthew v, &c., and this discourse, that Matthew is the introduction of the Father's Name, and

the principles, regenerate principles of Christ's Kingdom, the Kingdom of heaven, into the Jewish state and circumstances, showing who, and on what principle they would be accepted. Here, on the contrary, Christ is become the Centre, grace having been spoken of, forgiveness and cleansing, from which He sends out witnesses for testimony. Consequently, we have His estimate of things contrasted with the world's thoughts, into which they were really going (even if Judæa was the momentary name it had) and what became a disciple so going out. They are looked at either as Apostles of Christ, His judgment and will being declared before the people, or connected with the principles on which He was sending them out, not the mere introducing a new principle into the presence of the Jewish nation, as that which morally connected them with the Father, and with the Kingdom of heaven, when it should come, in the principles of the children in Messiah's Kingdom. In this we have contrast with the world—not a contrast with sayings *(dicta)* to those of old time.

—16. It seems to be marked as characteristic.

—17. *et seq.* I am disposed to think the same as Matthew v. "On a level place," is not the plain, but a meaning expressly distinct from it. The place from which the multitudes came is, in fact, in both cases, the land of Israel from one end to the other. Such parts of the discourse as peculiarly affected their place in the world, are by the Spirit put forward here, such as shewed conformity to Christ, the Second Adam, and non-conformity to the world which crucified Him. In Matthew we are presented with it in its bearings on the old system, and them as elected amongst it, and the principles of the new dispensation of which He

appeared as the Founder, but it has thus a narrower character of manifestation, though of the same root, though there is enough the same to lead us into this instructive comparison. Thus the "Now" (νῦν) is of characteristic force in this passage of Luke, and the whole will be found a detection of, or pronouncing on worldly principles—the present and that which is to come, brought into juxtaposition. And in this view compare the note on Matt. v. 25, and the place which it holds in Luke, confirming that much. But all Matthew is addressed to them as members of the new system—this, as children of God, and so Christians in the world. So compare verse 22 here with Matt. v. 11, &c., as there too it is introduced on His first collecting disciples, and public preaching, exhibiting the character of the new dispensation. So here, after the historical introduction as to the acknowledgment of Him in childhood, and the exhibition of His Person ministerially, as we have seen, we have here the moral character of the hope of the everlasting Gospel contrasted with "this age" —generally, we may say, its moral character. The time of the history points it out as the same discourse.

They are general principles. "I say to you which hear" comes afterwards. His disciples were however "the poor." Note they were not blessed because they were poor, but because theirs was the Kingdom of God. Therefore the Lord says "When" (ὅταν). And whereas we may rejoice in that day, 'tis in that day we may rejoice, not beforehand, thinking highly of ourselves above that which we ought to think.

All the moral characters of this are very strong, and their personal application gives them great force.

—27. "To you that hear" is a peculiar character—those who are His followers indeed. And note, therefore, in wisdom while we may desire the increase of faith for others, it is to those "that hear," to whom it is of any avail to say these things, not to despise the rest (for there is no difference) but it is not for profit. Yet this is the Spirit of Christ.

—30. "What is thine," (τὰ σὰ) that of which you can say: "It is mine."

—35. The reason, it is of faith, for all perfectness is of faith, and faith only perfects. "And your reward shall be great, and ye shall be sons of the Highest;" a reason which is its own reason, and which a man must have in order to be of any weight, for the conduct and the result here mentioned are apprehended together, for the apprehension of it in God is its power in us.

—37. I think here general principles are resumed as, in one sense, they run through it.

—38. "Shall be given" is a generic expression with Luke. "And shall men give" misleads from the sense.

These two verses pursue the analogy of the Divine character in this dispensation. Then comes the human relation and sense of the thing. There is moral blindness. Then judging after the flesh, and they cannot lead the blind. The flesh cannot guide the flesh; it cannot see its own evil. But the tree is known by its own fruits, not by its judgment of the fruits of others; see Rom. ii. This is traced to the root. What comes forth from the man is the plain evidence of the root from which it springs. Thus, in the new man, the old nature is judged, *i.e.*, so far as that, oneself. The plain power of practice is then adverted to.

Thus, having laid grace, cleansing forgiving grace as the basis, and the old bottles worthless, the principles of the Kingdom, as contrasted with the world, and of the children, are stated, and thereon the grace to, and recognition of Gentiles in faith openly brought in.

There is another blessed point brought in here, the flesh cannot lead the flesh, and make it better ; they would both fall into the ditch. The taught cannot be above his master (and the Jew was a teacher in the flesh), but then comes the revelation that every one that is perfected shall be as His master. The disciple is to be conformed to Christ. This is indeed a leading principle of this, if I may so call it, missionary discourse, *i.e.*, on which the blessed Lord sent His disciples forth, not every Christian here, but every disciple that is perfected (κατηρτισμένος). The instruction of the Master was of His own principles and standard. It was not salvation, but discipleship was in question here. It was what He expressed was to be learnt, and the blessed privilege of the disciple was, to be conformed to his Master. The teaching was the expression of the truth of His character. For our sakes He has sanctified Himself. The Lord then goes on to show it was not judgment, but the evidence of what was within by their acts, which showed the stability of their assumed condition, for indeed then there was a new nature.

—39. "Both" is an anxious word. God may give gifts, but when he who ought to be a disciple is the master, there is no teaching at all, and the blind lead the blind. But discipular place is according to the gift of knowledge. A man who is wiser than his teacher, through the knowledge of God's law, cannot be the disciple of such in

truth. On the other hand, he who really apprehends in principle all that his master teaches is as his master—one with him. There may be other principles connected with this, not to be passed over, but these things are true. Note, too, it is "shall be" (ἔσται), but a disciple cannot learn or have more than his master has to teach. But what were stated above are the principles of Christ's teaching. The blind cannot lead the blind, but those to whom it is given are to manifest that which they have, that others may, having it also, be so far as themselves, and they that have ears to hear shall hear and understand and be as the teacher.

—40. A form we have to note here is πᾶς (every one) with a participle; πᾶς κατηρτισμένος (every one that is perfected), here it is in that character, *en tant que* (in so far as). This use of it is common in other cases. Rom. xii. 1. Θυσίαν ζῶσαν (living sacrifice), as a living sacrifice; and so in many places. So 1 Tim. ii, 6, ὁ δοὺς ἑαυτὸν ἀντίλυτρον (who gave Himself a ransom); τὸ μαρτύριον (the testimony), where note the difference—He did not give Himself as a witness, the witness was for its own times. As to participles again, 1 Cor. xi, 4, 5; on the other hand Luke vi, 47, πᾶς ὁ ἐρχόμενος (every one that comes). Here the individual; so Matt. v. 22, πᾶς ὁ ὀργιζόμενος (every one that is angry), and elsewhere—the individual fact, not the characteristic case. As to the case of some nouns; without the article, they are clearly characteristic. All nouns are by themselves—"table" answers to what is that object. Only we do not so speak in English; so Matt. v. 14, πόλις κειμένη (a city situated), such a thing, not that thing. Exceptions are nothing; "gone to town," in England would be to London or some very large city in the thoughts.

There is also a promise in this word "perfected, shall be," &c.

—41. This verse needs little comment. It is a moral defect, and truth itself will always be wandering without grace.

—42. "To thy brother." There is not the spirit of love in it. One cannot say "brother" sincerely in doing it, for indeed there is pleasure in seeing the fault, a spirit of comparison. The Christian spirit of teaching is delight of soul in the holy things of God there, and in spirit communicating them to others in love, and so even in finding fault. No man ought to find fault until he be able to say "Brother," in the spirit of, and because he loves him; see accordingly, the directions if a brother trespass against us. As to others, we resist not evil, but bear all things. Men may rebuke sin if they have authority. "Perceivest not;" it may be forgetfulness, but surely there is the very moral fault in this—we see our neighbour's and not our own. Not so the repentant man, he is full, until cleared, of his own sins, and then can speak in the spirit of love which knows forgiveness. Therefore He says elsewhere: "Thou hypocrite," for it shows our mind is not changed as to the thing, yet we find fault with it in another; therefore evidently not of love, nor indeed have we right in this to say: "Brother;" so Ps. li, which see—you are bad enough yourself, and therefore it is impossible you can have a right moral judgment to direct others.

—46. This is a reproach, yet instruction is treasured up in it.

—48. The rock which was under the surface. The power of eternal life is not in the audience of the words,

pleasant as they may be, and seemly in profession, but in a fruit-producing change of mind, which no floods can affect, for it is within, it unites us to God which the great water-floods cannot come nigh as to its stability.

49. And the higher and nobler, the greater the ruin.

Chapter VII.

The case of the centurion is a very full one in principle. It is not merely an act of grace. It is grace to a Gentile, nor is that all. The great principle on which the Apostle rests this question is brought out. It was of faith, that it might be by grace, that the promise might be sure to all the seed. Faith, as the great principle, is introduced next. There is the recognition of the honour God had put upon His people; though despised and failing exceedingly, still he loved His nation, and had built them a synagogue. Unfeigned humility, for his faith was far beyond those he honoured, consequently a very high apprehension of the power and glory of Christ's Person as Divine, reaching beyond Jewish thoughts altogether, and yet, as yet Jews, quite kept in their place all through, even by the Lord, for He says: "No, not in Israel." He went with them, and yet looking at faith out of Israel. The effect was certain of this. Thus the whole order and opening of the house was brought out. Faith always makes humble, because it exalts the object of faith. His faith too, note, was by report, by hearing. "He built the synagogue for us."

—1. Christ does not conceal the principles of his faith,

though He may address them as obligatory on those who are really His people ; see verses 6 and 17.

—3. Upon this occasion it would seem, on his concern for his sick servant, he was told of this Jesus who was so famous, and He in Capernaum. But he was a stranger, and the Jews knew God, and were God's people, and they must be the fittest to bring this wonderful Person, but he believed that He was a man of mercy as well as power, and his servant needed Him.

There was surely sense of the deepest personal respect and affection—a strong apprehension, though perhaps untaught, of the excellency of His Person. I need scarcely add wonderful humility ever correspondent to the measure of the apprehension of that, and this not only shewing itself towards Jesus Himself, but also towards others, the connection of which note, for it is very instructive. This message of his friends very strongly depicts his character and feeling. He was one far more morally changed and turned to God than the people whom he looked to as God's people. So often where the light of the Gospel has not shone fully so as to form men on its principles He told nothing to Jesus of his service to them, nor spoke to Him of anything but his unworthiness, and this so decidedly and consistently that he begged Him not to come, as unworthy to have Him in his house, not as if he did Christ an honour by believing on Him—no pretence of receiving Him to set himself up. His sense of himself spoke his own grave and real apprehension of what his friends told of the fruits of it.

The Lord reaches all Gentiles on this principle.

There is great simplicity of heart along with his very strong and simple faith. Yet it would not perhaps have

become our Lord to have gone to a Gentile, though there is exhibited here that "In every nation," etc.; Acts x, 34, 35.

—9. He addressed the multitude with this remark; they learned grace to the stranger by it, but they yet knew it in one who loved Israel. The Lord, for God was thus manifested, we may say of course removed the evil faith thus truly brought to Him, for He came to do it.

Our Lord had baptized many disciples more than John, express disciples, *i.e.*, His disciples had, I suppose unto repentance, and that He was the Christ—rather in the hope of the coming Kingdom in profession by repentance. This seems to have been before His public preaching or His Apostles', etc., which note, for I doubt that our Lord baptized any after, but that He called upon all men then to believe on Him as the Christ come, when He had sufficiently won individuals by His private ministry, and even then He avoided human publicity. The character of the ministration is, we know, changed by the coming of the Holy Ghost, but I query if there be not a wisdom which, in the midst of evil, savours of this spirit—and the just use of this holy zeal for the hidden ones of the Lord, and holy boldness for His Name's sake in power give the character of a full and perfect minister. He did not in the nature of His ministry go beyond John; see chap. iv, 14, where the assumption of His ministry is noted.

—12. Along with grace to the (poor dead) Gentiles, came the evidence of power to raise the dead, but manifested here in human compassion, and in witness that God had visited His people.

Multitudes everywhere, but, alas! where is their end?

—13. Our Lord, as Man, did it upon the spur of the

occasion, but doubtless He was led to Nain of the Spirit which dwelt in Him in all fulness, that His glory might be shewn forth as it is at this day by it; so often, and thus it ought to be, for the Person of Christ is eminently shewn forth in it, His humanity being touched with our infirmities, and His perfect power to save. So, in their place, in measure, His Spirit in His servants; I mean as to the infirmity of the vessel, and the energy of the Spirit guided by a supreme power, not of course as to the person.

—16. This was the common word while it was a favour to themselves and till the trial of confession came.

We have now, I take it, the complete hinge of the dispensation brought out. The Lord receives, and bears witness to John the Baptist, not John to the Lord, and John receives Christ's testimony of Himself, and by report too. It was no longer preparing a people for the Lord, but receiving sinners, and raising the dead. Yet the fullest testimony is borne to John, and his work in baptism owned. They who had bowed to it among the Jews received the Lord's testimony concerning him. The Pharisees and Scribes rejected the counsel of God towards them, being not baptized of him. Thus again, while the Jewish work was owned it was owned from a higher ground, where the Lord in grace and living power, resurrection power, had placed Himself. This was based on entire rejection in and by the world, so that though He was doing all good, still it was: "Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me;" see the end then of verse 28, as marking the change now taking place. But even John had advocated repentance, which was more than law, for law allows nothing of repentance nor grace, for admission of repentance is grace. Law, with

God, recognizes equivalent atonement. Elias was testimony, not to those under the law properly, but to apostate Israel having left the place of covenant. We find, in addition, the recognition of a class who did understand these things—wisdom as to John, or the Lord's ways. Wisdom is justified of her children—the wisdom of God's ways, all of them apparently quite different, but understood in grace, but it is wisdom's children, those who are identified with her, and take her view of grace from above, and God glorified in His dealings, dealings towards man ruined, not man's judgment of God as if he was, as a sinner, a competent judge. It is more than they are saved, justified. It is the children of wisdom justifying wisdom.

—20. It was a turning over in fact of the disciples of John to the Lord, but that John sent for the satisfaction of his own mind, as to its ultimate expectations, is to me evident, as I have taken notice elsewhere at large. Some men reason from what could be, but the way in Scripture is to weigh the force of the testimony itself. It would be hard to say it were a sort of dramatic interlude to satisfy the disciples, and it destroys very deep and valuable instruction, namely, the paramount testimony of our Lord to Himself by His works, notwithstanding His humiliation, by which and His own testimony was the exercise of saving faith in seeing His glory—His glory as the Mediator, God manifest in the flesh. His Saviour-glory, the glory which he who has seen is saved, and has, knowing, seeing the Son, seen the Father also, who can fathom the mystery of the Person of the Son of God. Upon this, His Church is built, and shall endure; and in the knowledge of this it consists as the Scriptures manifest, the Spirit testifying thereto.

—24. People do not go in crowds into the wilderness for nothing. It is a strong appeal to their own former thoughts pressed home upon them, drawing them to the recollection of John's peculiar character.

It is exceedingly lovely this testimony to John, thus honouring His faithful servant, though he might have gladly decreased before the Light. But the Kingdom of heaven was now introduced, and the least in it was greater than he that was connected with the Jews and before it, than John the Baptist even himself. Our Lord testifies to John, not John to the Lord. Indeed he could point Him out by a revealed sign, but give Him no authenticating testimony; this was the Lord's to him.

—30. Note too He authenticated John in his real character; and this was always indeed a separating medium, as our Lord expressly used it afterwards when they enquired His authority. We see here the force of that question. It was a trial of their own unconversion by what they dared not deny. Note, the danger of having rejected grace or the testimony, for it hangs together, and the next testimony always bears witness to the importance of the former, so that we cannot receive this without really acknowledging that they hang together; but the rejection of the former hardens the heart against the latter, and the receiving this condemns us for the rejection of that. Note also God always begins at the right end—confession of sin and turning to Him without assumption of grace. We shall recognize with simplicity as a doctrine what we have received in grace ourselves. But the rejection of it as that paves the way for rejection of all the promises of God. Yet both have in themselves the ground of suitable proposal

to the heart and state of man primarily, and especially the Gospel, the reception of which produces that of which the other is the testimony and claim.

—13—31. In Matt. and Mark, in the narrative, "Lord" is not found, but "Jesus." Here and in x. 1, xi. 39, xii. 42, xiii. 15, xvii. 6, xxii. 31, and in John iv. 1 and vi. 23. In John, after His resurrection it becomes a constant word as to Him. It is certainly, which bears on Luke's Gospel, more constantly used in Acts, and Paul's Epistles than anywhere if it be not Jude. In Peter's second Epistle it is also very frequent; in John never, save in the third. It is very often used in James, and 1 Peter, of God as Jehovah.

—35. On the whole we have some extremely important moral facts with our Lord's statement of the case, and the Divine judgment as to the result of the whole. Simply let us say to justify Him in all His ways and works, and indeed "Wisdom is justified of all her children."

Some of the points are weakly noticed in the former note, but they deserve much study. Note, man's business here is to justify God, not himself against God. To justify God in God's way of justifying him—this begins by repentance, to wit, in ourselves; then we begin to justify God, and that too against ourselves, for this is the trying point. Thus we have to do it. But it is righteous to justify His ways, and suitable, and holy (for they are just) and in this God delights, for he that honoureth Him He will honour. Yet it is a counsel of grace to themselves, *i.e.*, in contrast, and, as it were, in scorn of the wisdom of this world which rejected every evidence of God's mind, whereas they who were despised, and indeed held accursed, were indeed the children of wisdom, and every one of them comprehended,

were possessed of, and acknowledged the whole wisdom of God, the only true wisdom which, etc., see 1 Cor. ii. Compare verse 29, here, and its connection with verse 28. There was also perverseness, for in any character they rejected it, and yet every child of God perceived His wisdom in both cases. It is however a solemn assertion on the Lord's part.

—36. Notwithstanding, however, this perverseness, our Lord did not stop manifesting Himself, the truth in Himself, to them, rather to the world. Note also the perfect simplicity and readiness with which the Lord went. No common civility was offered to Him. He was a poor Preacher, and it was an honour to be with the Pharisee. But He was the Lord of glory, and the Pharisee did not know that. So of His children and theirs. Doubtless our Lord was sensible of it, but His deportment it did not affect; He was used to it; indeed He sought it not. His mind was on saving souls, finishing the work His Father gave Him to do.

From this verse to the end, we have three hearts fully revealed—Light and grace come by Jesus Christ being there, in the blessed Lord. The Pharisee's—God in grace in his house, and he never found it out. The woman—all in the light, and having learned to trust in grace, knowing in this the Person of the blessed Lord; she loved much. God's own heart—perfect light, revealed the others therefore, but His own, God's, grace to the sinner. Grace that had won, grace that had inspired confidence, in full acknowledgment of sin, grace that thought of her, and while so meeting did not further trouble Himself about man's judgment. How should God, and God in grace, but have

thought of the woman, pronounced forgiveness, pronounced peace, assured of salvation, and denied its source in man's heart—by grace the revelation to it, faith in the blessed Person of the Son of God? And how was that faith showed?

—39. Here we find too the force of ἁμαρτωλὸς (a sinner), valuable as regards John's words. What if He were a Saviour of any poor lost sinners? Ah! God was unknown—that was the secret. We often reason justly as to that part of a question which is within human reason; so here. But God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor His ways our ways; our conclusions therefore go all wrong, there is something assumed, founded in our own thoughts which are not His.

Note the close of this chapter is evidently the beautiful comment on verse 35, "Wisdom is justified of her children." This poor woman was a child of wisdom, and she justified it. Justifying God is the grand point of true subjective righteousness or restoration to it. It is lost in us utterly, we have only to own it (as sinners too) in Another—first in John Baptist, or repentance ministry, that we are justly condemned or condemnable, and next in grace in His ways to us as sinners, dealing with us as such in grace (and righteousness) in Christ. The Pharisee Simon ought as towards the woman; but then he must have counted himself a sinner, and come in as such. It is impossible (ought not to be done morally) to justify grace towards the chief of sinners, and all without difference, unless we put ourselves in that place; the poor woman did, and justified God in His ways in Christ. If difference is to be made, *i.e.*, if righteousness is to be sought for or recognized in man,

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then grace to a sinner destroys that difference. But if the Holy God cannot sanction the decency, poor external decency of man—a good character—then it is only in the place ourselves of the objects of grace that we can justify that grace, for anywhere else we should claim a difference to be made, and condemn the grace, as self-righteous Pharisees did. They separated themselves, made a difference. But the comment is most lovely.

The state of this Pharisee's mind I think deeply interesting. I think it has been treated superciliously. But he failed entirely in the essential point, perceiving the glory of Christ. In this the Lord meets him, and shews, in contrast with the woman, the point where he was exercising judgment to be precisely the point where he failed. The converted and convinced mind sees the glory of the Lord as grace towards itself; the unconverted, unconvinced, however interested in the enquiry, as a man judges, and therefore judges according to its own thoughts, and therefore necessarily fails in seeing the glory which is not according to those thoughts. If it were on any ground, it need not have been manifested, our judgment of the Gospel must be wrong therefore, our reception of it as grace alone right, and alone the way of coming to the knowledge of it, for it is grace. When informed by it we may see its excellenec. Note also, there are generally, as moralists, two great points before us—our perception of the state of sin, and God's thoughts upon it. The one we may, in measure, perceive, *i.e.*, in their legal character, but the other we know nothing of, and therefore in truth fail in all our results upon the former. We are, however, warranted in the direct application of Gospel truth to it.

This mind and these thoughts of God were fully in Christ, and He exhibited them. They ought to be in the Church, and are, according to the measure of the Spirit by the Gospel, and I think it all hangs on these words.

This was not the Son of Man proving that, come here below, He had power to forgive sins on earth, by removing the Jewish and earthly consequences, but the direct and distinct revelation of the ways of God. It was not now righteousness presented to Him, or chastenings even removed in mercy, but a forgiving of sins in grace put sovereignly and freely to any poor sinner, manifesting and producing love in the forgiven, and thus reconciling to God, producing peace. It was properly grace, the ground upon which any poor sinner (a Gentile) could be received, and God manifested, not in requirement from man, and making man of importance (in the flesh) but making God and His character in sovereign grace all, so bringing in blessing, and its blessed effect upon the heart in developing the fruits of grace there in a heart restored to confidence in God in the sense of goodness. What a blessed picture! A goodness known in its blessedness through that which has introduced us to it, not only in the act but in Him who did it.

The discernment of guilt, judged of by man in its gross and heinous forms was one thing, but the grace of God which could blot out and forgive all was quite another. This was quite a new thing, not righteousness from a sinner to God, and Christ come only to sanction Pharisees and discern guilt, but love to a sinner (manifesting God in this new character) producing thankful, holy love to God, a new and blessed relationship, sovereign and beyond,

and out of the reach of all others. But how has God always to prove Himself right in His goodness to Man! So hard is man's heart!

—44. This is a moral explanation of the blessed results of this dealing and principle. Grace and love in Jesus had produced more lovely effects really, and in the sight of God who did judge all things, than were found in Simon. She discerned what he could not—the blessed perfectness of Divine grace, and the loveliness of Jesus; she judged as God did. What a place does grace put a poor sinner in! The full peace is a positive announcement; attractive goodness in God may be felt previous to this, but not certainty of conscience through Christ before Him. This was the announcement of this truth, that souls so restored were forgiven; that they were attracted, and fruits produced was evident. The Lord appealed to it. The forgiveness was the new, blessed, and full announcement of the real character and extent of this grace to the conscience and need of the sinner. "Her many sins are forgiven her." As we said, God knew all about it; our comfort is He does. But Simon had no sort of idea what God was to such, hence no love; he was curious as to Christ as a Preacher. What a rebuke to the whole principle he stood on! His ignorance, the state of his heart, for Christ had known this too, and proved Himself a Prophet! As Simon would not have had the love that forgives, produces the effect on the heart, the announcement of the authoritative forgiveness may remain to purge, and send away in peace the conscience. But the Spirit, and operative attraction of forgiveness is in the Person, *quod nota.* "Go in peace" was the sentence. Her faith had seen the Person and attractive grace of Jesus, God

manifest in the flesh, and had therefore really known, understood, and delighted in God, and she was saved; for surely one that does is actually saved, for that is to be saved. She loved well, then she knew God, and was born of God. Where had she found Him? In Jesus! A blessed knowledge of the highest perfection which scribes and learned men knew nothing about, for it was moral knowledge eternal and essential though given knowledge—a knowledge connected with the state of the heart and nature, and therefore acting on conscience, and forming the affections. She shone out in this. The other was peace pronounced, a very important thing, but the work was done; but she now knew that faith had saved her. It is both mercy and grace to put it on faith, for it reaches other poor sinners, and honours, and comforts the heart of the humbled one on God's part restoring the soul to confidence.

If He could not forgive sins, what good to sinners? But grace exercised and made known by the Son of man was blasphemy to man's heart (who needed it?)—what a state! And but for sovereign grace it was. But God was this. There the only answer.

—47. Note it is not said: "For which cause they are forgiven," but "For which cause I say." It formed a ground of reasoning and observation, not the ultimate cause which is absolutely impossible. The Lord, as it were, identifies Himself with, and vindicates against the haughty world, the believing sinner, and then gives assurance and peace perfectly regardless of the comments of their minds. He applies Himself then, not to their unbelief, which were useless, but to the other's faith, and having communicated forgiveness as an Interpreter, One among a thousand, He

shews unto the believing sinner his uprightness, to wit, his faith, for that is uprightness, it has right thoughts of God, right thoughts, in some measure at least, of oneself, as it is written: "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered: blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." For "When I kept silence," etc. And, which indeed is the root and spring of this matter, right thoughts about Christ, His work, His coming. The work is of grace, but the work is recognized, but as of grace; compare Hosea xiv. The whole question is, in this answer, settled: "Hath saved thee; go in peace." It is discharged from the conscience, while the soul finds itself infinitely and everlastingly a debtor to the continual fountain of all grace.

On the whole, there cannot be a more deeply interesting display of the whole relation in which man stands with God—its method, its order, and its results developed in Christ, all in all, than in this passage, which may be followed in the minutest detail, and so the more known of it, for some passages of Scripture afford a general principle, and do not affect detail, some exhibit explicit characters, and follow the workings of moral circumstances in the fullest and deepest measure, and the more they are investigated the more do their closeness and depth appear, and we see the secret springs of conduct and character, as here, from the God of heaven, through various ignorances and error, to the poor sinner, opened out in their true nature and character by the presence and word of Him who revealed the one, and came to judge and restore the other, who brought both into each other's presence that He might shew the mercy and fulness of God, and make it good to

His people. And this is to be looked for in Luke. So in the parable of the prodigal son, and that whole chapter, etc., for this is its object.

—50. "Go in peace." Not merely, I conceive, peace as to the particular act passed, but fully and in state, as if He should say to the waves: Be at peace—in peace generally and finally—a concluded state of reconciliation.

Chapter VIII.

We have then a brief picture of the Lord's life (as ensuing) not controversy with priests or learned scribes, but its proper character, though the other may have been by enforced occasion. He was preaching, certain women, a few women supporting Him—a humble place in, and because in a Lord denying race; alas! for them. But they had been subjects of His grace, and so their love drawn out towards Him, the expressions thus of His grace, grace as we have seen it just before in the poor woman. Evil spirits, sicknesses, and many devils had been the characteristics of these poor women. Where worthy of notice, one was connected with the palace; that was as remarkable. But these are the noticeable things in the ministers to the wants of, and companions of Christ. The noticing the women thus, as thus attracted, is every way worthy of attention. It is a distinct trait in the Lord's history, clear grace, and bearing with, and condescension to weakness, in its gentlest, and what would have been in this case its most despised forms.

—1. This is an interesting little episode—the manner

of our Saviour's life, and His attendants, and much is contained in it. What follows is a commentary or sermon on this.

We have then the next great character of grace—the ministry of the word ; see 2 Cor. v, 19. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them," and committing "unto us the ministry of reconciliation." There its committing to His servants the ministry is mentioned, here the Lord of course ministers Himself, but it is the same principle. It is no question of efficacy here, but of gracious service, for indeed much fell on profitless ground. It was not seeking fruit in His vineyard, but scattering seed wheresoever it might fall —a general act of grace. Note, as taking up the general principle, the Sower is left unexplained. We have only this parable therefore here as instructing us in the principle of grace, not in the prophetic history of the Kingdom. There is, however, the distinct setting aside of His associations and relationships in the flesh, and of Jewish principles. They (a Remnant) were spoken to "in parables, that seeing they might not see;" that dispensation on its folly in disowning Him, and to open now the door to all the seed, was judicially shut up. And it was at once said: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear," and to them in parables that hearing they might not understand. It was not Jewish privileges, but the scattered Word of God, wherever (through grace) there was an ear and a heart to receive it. Accordingly we have this announced at the close when the Lord's mother and brethren after the flesh are not recognized, and it is announced that he that hears the Word of God, and does it, the same is His mother and brethren.

Then another principle is introduced, responsibility for the communication of that we have received, for being in grace, and testimony of love, wherever really received it must, in the power of that, be in honour to the grace, and so desire of blessing to others. This was the evidence of really having—for the testimony now was of and in grace, and so going forth supremely to Gentiles and sinners known to be such. God did enter prerogatively and blessedly to light a candle not to put it under a bushel (the Lord make us faithful) but on a candlestick, and all was for manifestation. This was the very principle of what was now working. It was no conventional veiled system, but the going forth and coming into the world, of Light; evil fear to communicate every secret principle that hindered would come to light, but especially, and above all, the light was given to come to light—everything indeed would, but this was for it, given for manifestation as the light, as Paul therefore: "Hath shined in our hearts for the shining forth of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." "Take heed therefore how ye hear," *i.e.*, as responsible for the possession of all the advantages set before them by the Lord and His word, that it be possessed in the living power of grace as testified of by grace. The goodness of the seed would be test of the character of the soil. Happy for those in whose consciences grace planted a deep and Divinely rooted conviction, for conscience it is that the root abidingly strikes in, and so the heart of grace—and it is more than the natural man—for what is of God abides. But here the ordinary moral apparent effects are spoken of, for the Lord is not spoken of as working efficaciously as in Divine power, but

ministerially as sowing the seed, and to this therefore the parable applies, and rests on the detection of man, and responsibility on grace exercises in service and sowing the word, not in internal secret and saving power but ministry and fruit. It is an instructive portion of the word.

—5. The servant is not above his master; it is enough for the servant if he be as his master.

—7. It is not that there was nothing else. Nominally they were "sprung up" (συμφυεῖσαι) that was all, but it was enough to choke the word and ruin the man.

—8. It was "into" (εἰς) not "upon" (ἐπὶ). It is good and profitable to know the manner of the work as well as to declare the things which constitute the work itself. This I have sometimes enquired within myself as to, reasoning with others, but then it is: "He that hath ears to hear." There are those to whom it is given in parables.

—12. "Are those who hear." There is all they are; the rest the devil has, but they are hearers.

—13. "Who believe for a time, and in time of trial fall away." So ever, and such there must be.

—14. It is "who having heard" (ἀκούσαντες) not "who hear" (ἀκούοντες).

—15. Fruit is always brought forth in patience.

God in communicating the knowledge of the things of the Kingdom, does it to set up a light. "God who caused" (commanded) "the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts for the shining forth of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." In speaking therefore to men, He seeks a manifestation proportionate to that which is spoken; failure in this displays fault in the hearer, which will appear in the light

he gives forth (for indeed there is nothing hid—for indeed this was an unperceived fault—which shall not become manifest, or secret which shall not be known and come to light) "therefore take heed how ye hear." For indeed the word received in proportion to its full development within is the spring of abundant exercise in the word, and not only will it produce manifold more in fruit, but thus, as seed, give occasion to renewed enlargements in the power and fruit of the Kingdom. The manner of reception may be unperceived, but when it grows up into the light it will sadly appear in the manifested crop. "Take heed therefore;" who can tell the consequences of right reception of the word? And if there be not this solid fruitful rest, all apparent enjoyment of the light of the word and exercise of it will vanish into nothing. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples;" for God is a God of love, and works by this assimilation of others to Himself, though here it is enforced by warning considerations; so often.

The use of this passage in Luke very much manifests his style of application of principles laid down, I mean of course as entrusted to him. What follows is an instance of incidents brought in in their moral connection, without reference to their historical consequence. With this, accordingly, the immediate paragraph or subject ends.

—19, *et seq.* It is exceeding solemn this. How little of this entire purpose of heart is there! This divine separatedness to one thing!

Such was the conduct of the Lord, and such the duty of His people! He disregards the claim when it was of another nature. It was not ministry, it was not a claim

within the kingdom and its labour and patience, but out of it. The reason of their wish was not enquired into. If we see them we acknowledge their claim as such, and therefore are bound to fulfil the relation. The ground on which we stand is, there is a paramount claim upon one, which makes one not know them as such who are merely naturally related; if we are in the place, the duty follows, and it is sin to neglect it *in se*, but there may be a claim by Him who made the relation, and the duty coming from the source of that duty, takes us provisionally out of the place. The believer reckons those his kin who hear the word of God and keep it.

—22. We have then the condition of the disciples as launched forth and their trial—and that through unbelief as though He were asleep, *quod nota*. How truly we feel this! But it is unbelief; *i.e.*, the fear. The Lord however permits the trial for the exercise of faith, and permits to be in danger, and He apparently to be quite neglectful, because it is the trial of faith, in His interest in them which is their strength, and the identity of their cause with Him, and He is in the same ship with them; and surely we may say, with us. And yet He has perfect power to allay the storm, and does in mercy when called to take notice of it, for though the Lord may have purpose of it, the mischief is of Satan's will as with Job we see.

This then was the history of Christ and the Remnant's history, or Christ and the Remnant identified with Him. Its primary application is to the Remnant of the Jews actually brought out.

Note the storm is "on" the sea, but the ship is "in" the sea, and Christ is "in" the ship.

I cannot doubt the general intention of this fact—Christ leaves us and the Church, as though He were asleep, though: "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." Still the danger is apparent; the presence of Christ's power is not to man's thoughts. But then we may note the characters of unbelief, here selfishness. All fear, properly so called, is selfish—merely "We perish." It ceases to regard the Church as the vase of Christ's glory, in which He is interested, we are permitted to say, for His own sake. Was not Christ in the ship? What would have become of Him? Faith, on the contrary, resting in the apprehension of Christ's own interest in the Church, is calm, and not only has the fruit of peace in Himself, but in fact lives out of that selfishness which the other generates, honours Christ, and is able to serve his neighbour according to His glory, and the very injurious moral influence of the power of circumstances is avoided. Circumstances, when they thus by unbelief gain power over our mind, separate us from God, discharge our mind from all sanctifying influences, and make us *pro tanto* atheists; when, on the contrary, passed through in faith, they enlarge our acquaintance with God, deprive circumstances of their separating power, and work in us living communion, that inward life which is eternal. But Christ alone is the power of this to us. Nevertheless the Lord will rebuke, and shew His power to us, though we be weak. This is mercy.

—25. Here we have the general testimony (explained to His own) and their identification with Him in the tossings of apparent danger.

—27. Then from this verse we have the effect

historically of Christ's coming into this. The power of Satan set aside by a word, but the world wishing and sending Him away, the Jews rushing down to ruin, the saved man desiring to be with Him, but sent back to testify of his deliverance. Then the ways of grace (verse 40) to faith which characterises this part of the chapter.

We then get the general picture of the operation of grace in deliverance from the power of Satan, of the chiefest under it for a witness of Christ's power over it, and the witness of his mischief in the headlong destruction of those given up to him—swine, these unclean ones. The full effect of the Lord's first coming in testimony, mercy sent, on His departure, by the healed one, Satan not shut up yet into the bottomless pit, but hurrying others to destruction.

The healed Legion seems to me then the Remnant as delivered from Satan and brought to its right mind, then desirous to be with Christ, but sent back in testimony. The swine seem to me specially to represent the Jews given up; the Gadarenes the world. Such a picture, too, will be more especially in the latter day. Here the previous state of the man, Legion, describes the then present state of the ungodly Gentiles, and the swine, as we have said, the ruin of Judaism. But in the latter day Gentiles will be in this headlong swinish state, too, under the evil influence of the enemy, and Legion then is the Remnant of the Jews who are messengers to the world. This double application flows from the preliminary destruction of the then disobedient Jews, as hereafter more largely, and, with swinish apostate Gentiles, filled with the power of the evil one. The world's reception of Jesus is shewn in the conduct of the Gadarenes even upon the evidence of blessing.

The instruction is given on great moral principles withal, so that it has application to individuals. No human power or arrangement binds or arrests the prevailing power of Satan in the world. The limit of the work of the Lord is very plain verse 31, for, for the next dispensation, the enemy will be sent into the bottomless pit. But this shews, on the contrary, what is previous, more particularly accomplished mercy and so full witness. We have the destroyed, the saved and rightminded subject of grace in Legion, and then the indifferent and repelling world. The moral instruction is very strong.

The word of Jesus delivers, has perfect power over but does not send Satan into the abyss. The result of Satan's work (permitted perhaps in witness) is charged upon the Lord Jesus. Verse 40, I apprehend, presents Jesus' return to the Jewish people as on earth whence He had left on the ship. They are now waiting for Him; it is a remarkable interval. The first, *i.e.*, the voyage, showing the condition, feebleness, trial, and support of the disciples embarked with Jesus in the same ship; the case on landing, the active seeking operation of Jesus in deliverance and testimony towards the world. "Go and tell," was an unusual thing, not Christ's Jewish but His Gospel character. Then He had not striven, nor cried, nor lifted up, for He came as to His own, they would not receive Him, but here message was sent, yet primarily by the Jewish Remnant. His own house, was therefore the first commission. It is manifest that the character of the deliverance and the question brought out was Satan's power and influence, which in violence in Legion, in sober gentleness and rejection of Christ in the Gadarenes, or headlong destruction in the

swine, was the same power, and this, in the world in all its parts, was exhibited in the history, and Christ's power over it. But his quiet influence, by fear of Christ's disturbing their quiet and ordinary wordly matters, was as ruinous as all, and worse in moral exhibition, for it stood the exhibition of Christ's almighty grace. And this is very evil. They were told how it all was, and they besought Him to depart out of their coasts. This is the world. Legion, I apprehend, we must account as an expression of the concentration of all the various evil, various power of Satan which besets the human part, *i.e.* of the evil spirits as governing by it, and possessing that which by His power Christ delivers. Seven devils were in Mary Magdalene by various lusts. Satan governs and tyrannizes over the faculties of the believer when not yet delivered, and is possessed of these faculties in power as well—quietly guides by lusts and worldliness. The latter is the real evil as shutting out God. The power of Satan, when He comes to deliver, never can, nor control us when we have His Spirit, when by it resisted and the flesh kept down, though there may be consequences suffered for that, where need was. Christ suffered, but He for us, we as consequences, still as occasions of His power, and proofs of capacity of a greater deliverance. How are we fallen !

The details of this passage are most instructive to us. How completely Satan identified himself with the man's mind, so that the man spoke as speaking his own interest and wishes under the influence of Satan, though there was the sense of superior power present, and so now with the word : "What have I to do with Thee?" "I beseech Thee torment me not." Note the use, too, of the unclean

spirit and the demons. The manifestation of Satan's power is a real help to deliverance, but not unless in the exercise of power to deliver, but it marks what is there, and the might that can shew, and force them to shew their true character, however man's evil heart may give place to them. I suspect it is: "he besought" not "they besought—*παρεκάλει* not *παρεκάλουν*, verse 31.

The account judges the power of Satan as prince of this world, and shews the character of the believer's (Remnant's) deliverance from it—formerly a prey to all its lusts, and driven about, though never, through the preserving love of God, able to do the very first thing they did with the swine. The believer (Remnant) would have shut out Jesus from tormenting it, as it accounted it in a state of nature. The world does send Him away, however quietly, not liking the manifestation of God's presence to disturb its peace, and He sends back the delivered as witnesses of the delivering power, of which they are subjects, to the world. First it was to their own home; so, beginning at Jerusalem. We have three parties or classes here—the delivered, the given up as swine, and the quiet, careless world annoyed and distressed at the Lord's presence, and begging Him to go away. It was all that poor Legion had done.

—31. In English *ἄβυσσον* sounds as though it were the sea, but it is the same word as the "bottomless pit" in Rev. xx, "the abyss."

—36. This is evidently inserted with purpose, the manifestation of the Lord's power. Though in the way of mercy to others, when His grace is not personally felt leaves the soul still in its hardness, they had the same

circumstances before them precisely as the man healed, the effect was totally opposite. We may observe too the character of this short visit. It is on the whole a deeply instructive statement.

I think too we ought to note that the supreme directing mind evidently disposed the incidents of our Lord's life, though He may have walked through them as Man.

—40. This I think marks generally the return of Jesus to the Jewish people.

—41. Then in the visit to Jairus, there is the character of His dealing with that people—desires awakened for His interference; but before ever He really reaches the scene of mercy, the object of mercy is really dead, and, to all man's thoughts, hopeless, and the deliverance is really and altogether in the power of resurrection, and the deliverance in that day shall be altogether so. And such is the mind and journey of the Lord—the deliverance of the virgin, the daughter of His people (the Remnant of) those He visited in His mercy.

But then another principle came in in the way—to do this He must come full of grace and truth. He must come in that fulness of God's character with grace and love in His heart which, wherever discerned, must flow forth and answer to the need which drew on it, for it was love in power to save. To understand it was to enjoy, and have its saving influence. In a word, faith always got a blessing, and must. It was this principle that, while it might now save those that believed among the Jews, let in the Gentiles. It was "by faith," and therefore "upon all those who believe." "Through their faith"; see the previous account. It was the manifestation of the active power of Christ's

Divine purpose of love, which went in the mind of that love out of its way, and when the subject of it was entirely out of its mind, as sin makes us for all real things of the soul, meets in its own supreme will and power, the power of Satan which holds us there, and casts by His word the unclean spirit and power out, and the man restored loves to be with Him whose presence once he abhorred and could not bear as under Satan's power. Now it is the other side of the picture, the desires and need of faith, knowing its misery, meeting necessarily the full supply of love and power in which He came, in touching if it was (in the shame and sorrow, yet secret faith) of its need, but the hem of His garment, and finding healing. The one was the deliverance of supreme purpose and power, keeping even when Satan seemed to have his own way, hindered, and no restraint or fetter of man was of any avail, yet never allowed to do what would have hindered the meeting Jesus —the first thing done with the swine. The other, the manner of it in faith when discerning need made one seek, or hidden shame met Him in the crowd by the way, and found in the throng means to be nigh and find resource in Him.

The incurable disease and death of sin was entirely met by the grace and word of Jesus, as well as the power of Satan, in the mighty and irresistible triumph of His purpose and will. Let Satan have what permitted power he might, he could do nothing against that will, nor an instant withstand the power. The deliverance from it only became witness to the world of what had come in to deliver in Jesus, of the saving power of God.

It is very lovely, in the case of this poor woman, seeing faith breaking through the difficulties, and having, through

a touched heart, this perfect confidence in the power that resided in Him. How faith makes its way! What discoveries it makes of His Person and blessedness! The hem of His garment is enough to satisfy its desires, because filled with the power of His presence, because it has so deep an apprehension of the excellence and value, the power and grace of His Person. The heart is filled with that, and all about Him is clothed to it with that; but this is faith operating by need. I do not say that there is not withal a power of communion more fully and peacefully acquainted with His blessedness through the Holy Ghost given when the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by that given. Still need finds its resource in grace, and the blessedness of His Person here. Let the theory of the world too be ever so great, how so weak a one to find her way to Him? Why, He was in the way (the sorrowful, heartless, easy way of this world) for it drew this weakness to it by the secret power of this very grace. To be near Him was the point. It had its power in as well as on faith, and drew it near Him, while the rest but thronged Him, as the loadstone to itself, separating from all around, not by power in what is drawn but by attractive efficacy on it. Faith, in a word, is exhibited here, as we have said, as the manner, as power and purpose against Satan's dominion.

—46. There was intention in it—that is faith. The Lord cannot but give when His character is known and drawn upon.

It cannot be overlooked that there is not a single sentence recorded by Luke which is not of the strongest moral character. This is so familiarly, so that it needs no comment, though worthy of the closest attention.

—47. Healed sin may be manifested. Though in itself it be of shame and sorrow, but indeed it is the manifestation of faith and the Lord's acceptance. It is the clothing of the Lord's glory thrown around the poor sinner, and in this he appears before men, and testimony to men, that he that was separated is fully restored, reinstated. He is "immediately healed," and is no longer the object of separation as unclean, and this the Lord shews, though conscience and the memory of man might, *per se*, otherwise not recognize the change or estimate it. But the Lord restores wholly; it is His prerogative, for He heals wholly, and clears the conscience. Of this we have many testimonies in this Book, as we shall see in the prodigal son. The testimony is here, as in the woman, in the Pharisee's house.

—50. Fear and faith do not run well together; but see Mark on this verse.

—51. There is great simplicity and evidence of truth in this. There are certain undue, unbelieving feelings of others with which we must not get entangled, or it will be impossible for us to exercise faith towards God; and our love towards those who really need it claims this. The truest charity and holiest faith sometimes assume a very harsh appearance to the false feelings of man, and a very foolish one too, but faith acts upon its own resources. The result will shew where truth and power and goodness was. He cast them all out. We must act decisevely at times towards men, if we would act faithfully towards God. The enquiry for us is: Is this really done in love? Note too, they all seemed on the same errand of kindness and condolence, but one was selfish in fact, and habitual, the

other intelligent from God. One could not see beyond itself, the other came with power. They were indeed in contrast and opposition one to the other. Yet first observe it would shew itself even to them. The Lord would see if they would entertain His faith, not in any assumption of power so as to claim subjection to Him, but in proposal of a common object if they could enter into it, which He saw but they could not. If indeed their hearts had been really affected or open, they would have leapt at the thoughts, though it seemed impossible, and indeed it was true. But instead they mocked at the Proposer as foolish, and for His faith. Unbelief is ever right in its premises but wrong in its conclusions, because it is unbelief as far as it goes, and because it leaves out the power of God overruling these premises. But it is the most foolish of all things, it forgives itself on its ignorance of the greatest and most certain thing in the universe—the power of God. The Lord grant His people the practical spirit of faith!

—56. He charged them to tell no man what was done. This was the character of His Jewish service on His rejection; publicity became necessary to vindicate His Name in what was rejected, but He did not now strive nor cry. The testimony of the Holy Ghost to His exaltation, and therefore Gentile ministry was quite of another character, though Gentile ministry brought into another truth—union.

Our Lord did not omit the least little attention in His mercies. Not occupied with the greatness of His own work or the obligation of others to Him, His mind goes forth on the least occasions of one who had received the greatest of mercies. He perfects His work because all selfishness was

absent from His mind. All comprehensive love flowed from perfect Love, for there was no distracting medium of perception: "Tell it, said He, to no one." But He could not be hid. This is the spirit, so far above us, to seek. It is to us through faith. It works not merely not for a return, though it delights in it, but not from results, but from communion with Him who is Love. It works by faith, and springs ever from Him who is above selfishness ever, in many shapes finding its way into our heart while it gives the real joy of love in the good done as to the blessing of another, but rests in Him from whom it flows. Nor will anything else make us workers together with Him, for our objects will always sink us in principle and communion, if we work for them. It is evidence of the reality of the work.

We get then in this chapter His reception, but the character of His coming as a Sower in connection with the responsibility of man, and then the history of the Jews in respect of it, given in descriptive or suggestive circumstances. The word of God characterized Him and His work or service in the world.

The whole order of God's ways in regard to His reception in Israel is unfolded in this chapter. He is surrounded by the Remnant devoted to Himself. He sows, as often remarked, does not seek fruit; only verses 16—18 add the idea of its moral universality, and the responsibility of man. His disciples, not natural relations are all that He owns on earth. In all the difficulties in the scene into which they launch forth, He, though He seems asleep and indifferent, has absolute power. Israel, when the Remnant are delivered and attached to Him, rush into destruction

as the unclean ; the Remnant would leave with Him, but they are sent back in testimony of the deliverance which they have received themselves. The special application to Israel is then brought out. He is on His way to heal the daughter of His people ; he who in the crowd on the way touches Him by faith is healed. The deliverance is really giving life to the dead, yet treated but as asleep. Several of these points have been noted apart, but the assembly of the whole is the key here. It is not dispensational, as in Matt. xiii., but the moral ways of God, and their results. In the following chapter it is more immediately and narrowly His position according to promise in Israel, enlarging itself into His place as Son of Man, and then the Spirit that became them as passing through, with the knowledge of this. It is more historical, though showing that He takes the place provisionally and rejected, and this appears ever clearer in reading the Gospels.

Chapter IX.

Having thus largely exhibited His own mission, exercised His disciples in acquaintance with it, and shewn the source from which it flowed, the Lord sent others (the Twelve) to exercise a similar one as to work through the country. It was necessary for both reasons, specially as to the latter, that it should be first exhibited in His Person, they appearing as His disciples. Then He sent them out. As to their manner of carrying it on, it was founded in the soundest principles of holy wisdom, and is therefore applicable at all

times as to their conduct. As to reception, it is to be remembered it was an express mission.

It was evidently the mission of God manifest in the flesh. There is in it power over all created things high and low, the thoughts and ways of men. There is nothing like it in any one else. Indeed there is no instance of mission other than of the Lord directly. There may have been committal of received truth to faithful men within their own sphere, but this by the bye.

Note also when the Lord called, as endowed with special gifts, any whom it seemed good to Him to call and endow, He afforded objects on which the faith of these persons should work and find support in the trials into which faith would necessarily call them, and feed their own souls in the statements they should make. It required sinews of strength, as it were in their own mind, when they were claiming the attention of others to their moral statements, things not exactly the matter of their statements, or the proof of their arguments, for it was confined to themselves, but which should animate and strongly determine their own minds as they went on. Thus we find here and at the Transfiguration, and some other occasions. Thus, too, we find Peter using it in his first Epistle, i. 16. And we may add the case of Paul; see the circumstances of those transactions.

This mission of this chapter seems to me to have been a mission also within the Jewish sphere of our Lord's service. It was power in mercy come in, then dependent on His presence. They lacked nothing; they healed diseases; they preached the Kingdom of God. The prohibition to go is not mentioned, the character of this Gospel not being

contracted to this, but the nature of the ministry was this. It was not exactly here amid, as in Nazareth, but then sent to declare the Kingdom, and authoritative denouncement if rejected. This was mercy to rescue.

The rumour had reached even the apostate king of the Jewish people, for so he was though his dominion was now partial, but where Christ's ministry chiefly was—the prince of the Land, the last and farthest from hearing ordinarily of any, for the Lord left them without excuse. We have, in this sending, a most important exercise of Divine authority, and competency to communicate Divine power.

—6. "Everywhere" (παντα χοῦ). It was general—a testimony, no witness to them as objects but to their mission, *i.e.*, the Lord. Is it not "They went through from village to to village"? Preaching and healing, as we have seen, is quite of proper Jewish blessing, because the blessing was here no disease of Egypt was to be on them, and "Who forgiveth all thy sins, and healeth all thine infirmities," was the promised blessing. Verses 7—9 marked how far the rumour of Him had reached.

—7. We have in Herod, all through, the anxiety of a natural convinced mind about the manifestation of the things or power of God, no affection for the things themselves, that acts when no power is manifested, no witness of them present. It is full of doubts and enquiries, occupied with them when this power is manifested, with itself and its pleasures at all other times. It follows exciting causes not gracious affections—the outward, not the inward power of God. To others this may be instrumental, but in no way final. The abiding power of

Divine goodness occupies the chambers of their heart and thoughts, and they act by it, or according to it.

—10. This was natural; they were but missionaries. Note, here is the place of report, the subject matter "Whatsoever they had done." And indeed the only safe one. It is a different thing to report one's doings to a holy Judge, who has committed work to us, and to an indolent neighbour. Fruits of grace we may report, to the joy of the Church. From work into the wilderness is a good transition, and not to the midst of men. Among them work retires to Christ, if it may be alone, as far as reference goes. Then you will, if it be for you, work well again. If you follow the Lord in it His work will soon be upon you again, be wholly it. Know when your work is ended, or you will do something besides your work, and miss that which will fit you for the next work that is to come. You can only do God's work, and that is what is given you to do. Seek the Lord's guidance in this, for in ourselves we have anything but sufficiency for these things. But the multitudes soon came. It is not pleasant to have crowds always about one claiming attention, but He came to do the will of Him that sent Him, and to finish His work. He received them, spoke to them, healed them. Note even here may we say, though with the Lord it was deliberate, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." He gave Himself every way to their need.

The Lord having taken them into retirement, the people still follow Him, and He occupies Himself with that in mercy and grace, of which the disciples were merely representative instruments, but they were quite unconscious of its

resources now to be developed according to another Jewish promise, "He shall satisfy the poor with bread." "We are here in a desert place," was their consciousness, *i.e.*, we have no resources. The Lord expects the recognition of present power in them: "Give ye them to eat." They reckon, as ever alas! unbelief, upon their present actual resources, showing their state of darkness as to who was there. But it did not hinder Jehovah's love, nor Jesus' power as such. They are witnesses instead of agents, for indeed it must be His work, but faith participated in this. But we may remark that, although acting with Jehovah's power, He still acts with the most blessed expression of a Servant's but a Son's confiding dependence—the consciousness that blessing was in heaven, and grace in His Father, He knew that well, though He were the witness and agent of it on earth, the medium and witness of it.

—12. Unbelief is often too wisely considerate; but Love outpasses it, for Love often suggests faith.

—13. This assumes and therefore tries their faith in Him present and caring for Israel, and so competency to meet Israel's need, as the consciousness and expression of that power in Him, still holding and using it, however, as a Servant. Certainly if the Lord had not been there, it had been strange and inconceivable.

—16. "Looking up to heaven, He blessed," serves as the full expression of the blessed Lord's position.

The answer was abundance and over. Not as Moses in the wilderness: "He that gathered much had nothing over," where the diligence of man came in, checking the assumption of his competency, and withal shewing mercy to the feeble suited in application to what we had; here it

was now the multiplying and multiplied abundance of the Lord present Himself, greater in His humility and fuller in blessing than man in his acquired blessing in the fullest human favour, for the weakness of God is stronger than men. But we are to observe it bore the character of grace. But however rich the manifestation of grace, the Lord entering into the secret place of God, in His humiliation knew and found, that, let His benefits be what they would, man in his pride, man in all that man had, would reject them. As He was praying alone, His disciples with Him —for His ministry and the grace of Jehovah in it had been fully publicly shewn to the people—He began to unfold this to them.

—18 *et seq.* The position the Lord takes is very clear and full. He is praying as Son of Man—forbids the disciples to say any more He is the Christ, saying the Son of Man must suffer. Here it is all Jewish rejection, death and resurrection. Then He is seen in the glory of the Kingdom, and owned as Son of God. He speaks of His own glory in connection with this manifestation of the Kingdom (and revelation of the Father's house, the excellent glory) *i.e.* Son of Man; His Father's, *i.e.* Son of God; of the holy Angels, *i.e.* Jehovah glory. Then He tells them the Son of Man will be delivered into the hands of the Gentiles. His love abides, He heals, and was the Son of Man come to save men's lives.

First, however, the Lord brings out the position of the nation and that of the disciples, not resting here in contrast, as in Matthew, on the subject matter of the faith as changing the dispensation and founding the Church, but on the contrast of their and the nation's state as to their

faith in what was proper to themselves as actually presented unto them. It was not a question of the enmity of Chief priests, but the current notion among the multitude to whom full evidence had been afforded. But among them were merely the speculations which wonder had created. But Peter, ever the spokesman of the disciples, expresses in the certainty, the instruction of faith—the Christ of God—He was the Anointed of God. This man therefore was born of God, as we know from John. But this glory of Judaism, and truth of God, this appropriate, Divine, and Jewish dignity, this office to the nation they were now no longer to tell. Having been refused on the merits of His glory and truth, He was not to be presented for the excitement and satisfaction of their passions. They were to tell no man that He was the Christ. He had presented Himself as the Fulfilment of the Prophets to them, and now as Son of man, a larger more humble Name but with glory reaching much farther, He was to suffer. He was to be owned by no fascinating and locally honoured title, but to accomplish a much larger and more important work by means of this very rejection. This was the counsel now to be fulfilled. He was to suffer, and all that was respectable by age, office, and learning was to be arrayed against Him, death to be the consequence, and He to rise again. This was opening quite a new and another scene, but the entire rejection and suffering here was to be His portion, and this would be in principle true of them. This was not what we saw before—a trial of the Jews by ministry amongst them, but the results of their rejecting Him, in the sorrow, utter humiliation, and death of Jesus, and the accomplishment of the Father's counsels, of a better

and righteous, in the fullest sense righteous, glory thereby. The Lord announces to all the plain consequence. If anyone will follow after Him, (He was not going to have the present glory of Messiah) he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Him, and He was going a sorrowful journey quite to the end, even to death. And this was the daily character of the service, for sin and Satan's power had come in on the world's condition, and so now proved. And whosoever would save his life would lose it. "I protest by your rejoicing," says the Apostle, "I die daily," for this too is a matter of detail. Whosoever should lose his life for Christ's sake should find it really.

"For whosoever shall desire to save his life shall lose it," etc. Have we faith for this?

Our Lord was interested to know this (verse 18), and justly asked, speaking of Him as a Prophet. There is always a floating enquiry, to an unknown degree, prevalent in such a case. Though His part was simple consistency with His own character if He were a Prophet, yet His whole work hung on the influence which that consistency had on the minds of others. Whatever He might have been Himself, His work would have wholly failed if it had not been so. He asks accordingly, regarding the multitudes (οἱ ὄχλοι). Subsequently the power of the Spirit might bring home His glory to individual consciences, but the question now was of Him as One conscious perhaps of His own place, but whose influence on the thoughts of others, as an Object, was the turning point of Divine influence.

Our Lord too, Himself, had, observe, to go through, for it is thus brought before us, the various rumours of man's unin-

structed judgment, while He knew the remedy if they had but known Him, while He felt their wanderings because they did not know Him, while He saw Himself unknown the while. Yet faithful consistent testimony was all, ever His instrument in ministering amongst shepherdless man; indeed so it must be, but this calls for wonderful constancy and faithfulness. And there are those that know the Lord —indeed so much so that to spread the testimony that He was Christ, save by the witness of His work and character, *i.e.* by morally converting means, was a direct hindrance to His work, and He corrects any such tendency in the minds of His disciples by telling them He must suffer. His glory cannot be let out but in the Lord's way. And, note, it was necessary that it should be brought into direct collision with those who assumed the glory, that it might stand on its own true ground, even of God, and this by their growing opposition to the character, influence, and moral power of Him who was sent, and to this end as righteous against them, for God is always, always righteous. It must have grown in secret, *i.e.* separate from other influences, by the simple influence of His character and true glory. This was what they proved themselves opposed to. It was evident that the Lord's only part, speaking of Him as exercising a ministry, was consistency with this character, the growing influence of which He knew indeed was to lead Him only to rejection and to death, by all that was commonly looked up to. "And He said to them all: If any one will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."

—25. First, on the great and broad principle, what would a person give in exchange for his soul, gain the

whole world and be lost himself, the case is clear *in se.* Secondly, as to dispensation, the rejection of Christ was not for ever. The time of His righteous glory would come. Those who were ashamed of Him and His words, He would be ashamed of when He came in His glory and His Father's, and the Holy Angels'. This would turn all things to their true account and glory. But the righteousness and truth of this glory (at least the manifestation of the Kingdom of God) would be shewn before some then present tasted death at all. This was accomplished as we see, by 2 Peter i, in the scene of the Transfiguration which follows.

Indeed it is a question between the world and Christ, and indeed a short, even the present, time will manifest, by the glory of the everlasting kingdom, where wisdom, where truth was. Christ and Christ's words are the immutable and stedfast guides, and confession of them is faithfulness, and "What shall it profit if a man gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or be cast away?" For there is a time in which God will shew Himself in His power. What say we to this nearness? It is welcome to the Christian. Rest, and answerable rest too, is welcome to the tried.

—29. One cannot doubt that this was the form of His glorified humanity.

We have to remark here again, how this Gospel places the Lord in the place of dependence. It is not noted in the other Gospels He went up into the mountain to pray. It was the privacy into which He was cast by the mighty change which was now developing, and the dependence on His Father, with disciples called into this intimacy as the school and birthplace of service, which induced the unfolding of the glory, accustomed in one

sense to Him, but blessed in such an epoch, and formed as peculiar to His suffering, so new to them, but introducing them to the service and the suffering of which it was to be the result. He was praying when it took place. And then Moses and Elias, the great messengers of that economy, and so harbingers of His glory, and the failure of all before, speak of this great and marvellous event, His leaving the world, His decease which was to happen at Jerusalem —the centre of the blessing of God upon the earth, and David's royal line, but in man's hand the place of the rejection of that blessing, and the death of the Son of David the blessed. Moses and Elias appeared in glory—the condition and exhibition anticipatively of the Kingdom of God. But in all this the wondrous centre of the hope, the manifestation of every goodness and wonderfulness in God, of evil in man, and yet blessing by grace to him when every principle from every side, and from every agent came into play, and when the blessed Jesus bound Himself that all might be accomplished, giving Himself up for this glory of God (His Father), and the display of all this, the departure of Christ out of a world of sin by man's will in madness, Satan's power, and yet the Lord's love, to begin a new scene of moral beauty and glory yet unknown, formed the subject of these chosen witnesses, and in glory anticipative associates of Christ. The topic of the Kingdom of God, and so worthily and rightly, as the glory was the display of it, Moses the establisher, and Elias the witness of failure returning in despair to Horeb, but the signally faithful witness in the failure under the law, for Elisha savoured of resurrection, were the just witnesses to His death, and instruments of the display of His glory as the close of that, and as the

faithful Remnant themselves rejected, partakers of the glory. The poor disciples, pictures of human nature in this solemn scene, have fallen asleep, not wilful wickedness but the thorough good-for-nothingness of the flesh. So on other ground it was in Gethsemane. But, being awake, they saw His glory. They were no present associates in the counsels, *i.e.*, their minds did not enter into them; it required what was heavenly to do that. The portion of the heavenly glory, not the actual glory, they saw, that their faith might be strengthened and their testimony fortified thereby, as we see in 2 Peter i. They were standing with the Lord, we may observe, on the earth. He was in this scene transfigured, but not elevated. They were all on earth, though this may not be all, but it remains true thus far, as the Kingdom of God upon earth. The disciples shew that until they had the heavenly teaching of the Spirit, though struck with the glory, and so benefited, they had no understanding of the counsels of God, or purport of it, and zeal but displayed the ignorance, and their real unconsciousness in any abiding faith of the true heavenly glory and authority of the Lord—no sense of His being really the Son of God.

But in the meantime this signal of the glory had passed away, and they all entered into the cloud. In fact, though great things are simple and gracious when Jesus is near, as much the revelation and immediate authoritative instruction dispensed from God, as Sinai, they entered into the cloud, and God talked to them there out of the cloud. It was "without law," but witnessed by the Law and the Prophets. Peter was permitted to propose the erection of three places of recurrence to Divine wisdom and instruction, but they are brought into the cloud with God Himself, not now to

reveal the glory to them—that was not the path required, nor were they capable, that was to be the Holy Ghost—but the revelation was to set up the Person of the Lord Jesus as the One who, as the Son of God, could have no associate as the source of direction and wisdom, and, by the authority of the voice of God the Father, point His Son out as the only One who was to be heard. In the revelation of glory to come Moses and Elias are with Him. In the designation of who is to be heard the blessed Jesus is alone. This is what is given parallel to Moses receiving the law in the mountain of Sinai; not a new law, not words pronounced by Jesus even, but reference to Jesus Himself whom they were to hear. A much more blessed thing! A Person to look to who was Son of God! Much more largeness of apprehension and liberty! We have the mind of Christ, and yet constraining in conduct, yet more fully, deeply, and perfectly the words and mind of the Lord are to guide us in everything, even in thoughts, and to form ourselves instead of merely presenting rules of conduct, however suitable they might be, or holy, just, and good.

The effect of this, however, was to be revealed afterwards. It was for them now, for their use hereafter, not the subject of their revelation but the strengthening their souls, and the additional authentication of it; and they kept it close, the Lord so ordering it, till the time of their testimony publicly to His glory came. Still this is, in a certain sense, Jewish glory—the Kingdom, but not the manifested union of the Church with Christ. This glory, which Peter saw and quotes, was different from what Paul saw and acted on; this, the confirmation of what prophets might have stated —that, the revelation of a mystery hidden from ages, and

then revealed. Moses and Elias in glory on earth with Jesus was not Jesus as the Lord declaring the unity of the (suffering) Church with Himself. The power and coming as manifested on earth was here, but the union of the Church with Him in glory was revealed there, and on this the Church properly rests now. The gift of the Holy Ghost is connected with both these points (touched on elsewhere) in Peter's testimony the witness of the exaltation of Jesus, in Paul's the seal of the Church's union with her exalted Head. Thus the rejection of the nation conducted Jesus, and His disciples with Him, up to this scene of glory. But the Lord returns to His exercises of mercy, but with "How long shall I be with you?"

It is not that the Church does not share the glory manifested simply as glory, for when He who is our Life shall appear, we also shall appear with Him in glory. But still there is that which is properly prophetic, and that which is of the Father's house, unrevealed till He who could alone reveal that Name came, and, by the Holy Ghost given, introduced the disciples into the power of it. The power is what the ancient saints specially desired to see, and they will see and enjoy it, and be perfected in it. But there was this better thing reserved for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. They as "just men made perfect," we as the "Assembly" or "Church of the first born whose names are written in heaven." They rejoiced to see Christ's day, they saw it and were glad; but our joy is to dwell now in the Father's house where Christ is hid, meanwhile partakers of the Spirit, and the promise to us is "We shall see Him as He is." It is not only as the glorious Christ, but as the Son of God and our life now hid

with Him in God, we sons with Him, and He shall come in His Father's glory. And I take it the Day-star arising in our hearts, for so, after all, I still take it, is to us connected with this, and a distinct thing from the word of prophecy however sure, and which it confirms, the present revelation by the Spirit of our portion in that day, though how that may be connected with its nearness, I do not now or here say. But this vision confirmed the word of prophecy, and was not the Church's enjoyment of the Father's house, nor, consequently, the fulness of our present joy, nor the revelation of our portion there when the marriage of the Lamb comes, and we are where He is. Though it be the glory of that day, and He is manifested with us in glory, John xvii, 22, compared with 2 Peter i, 17 created difficulty in my mind when I first opened the subject above, and the blessedness came on my soul, but it was forgetfulness of verse 24 which just adds the thought I have sought to express, for the close of that verse evidently introduces us into a still higher region of blessedness, a place however where we by grace participate, as is evident from the close of verse 23. Hence too, as to the counsels of it, 2 Tim. i, 9. The grace has been given us "before the ages of time" (2 Tim. i, 9). Now this very glory of the Kingdom, though it display more, for it does, is one of the "ages," or "ages of time." So Titus i, 2, and compare the place of the Church in Ephes. iii, 21, where this love is spoken of in its present dispensation in power to us, on the title "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," as contrasted with glory merely, chap. i, founded on the title "God of our Lord Jesus Christ;" both of them, however, take it up for the Church and its portion in this, not merely the day of earthly glory, "the power and

appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ," though that be involved in it. Our being with Christ, so as to see in His glory the witness of the Father's own love to Him, is distinct from our manifestation in it that the world may know that we have been so loved. The accomplishment of prophetic promises, so as to show the faithfulness of Jehovah to all His saints of old, is yet another thing, though all these things may be assembled in one blessed time and scene, and Creation itself be involved in the blessing for the glory of Him who formed and redeemed it, the happy and blessed witness of His power who is the Second Adam, though the time beyond ages may be behind all this. And indeed our place is before and beyond ages, for it is the Father's love to the Son, "before the foundation of the world." But this was the confirmation to Jews, disciples, of the prophetic glory, and a clearing up of it. His day, His power and coming, not the Church's portion in the Father's house, though the relationship, on which that was founded, was declared by the Father's voice carrying them thus on from this into the groundwork and basis of their intermediate, and true, and lasting service.

—31. A strange time to talk of His decease! Yet so it must be with the Lord. It was His way of glory, there it all had its root. That must be passed through; Heb. ii, 9.

Moses was the original gatherer, Elias the characteristic restorer of the people of God. They were as fountains from which the Church flowed, but it here appeared but secondary instruments but appointed cisterns of refreshment; ministers to Him in whose house they had indeed been faithful in their generation.

We have remarked on the force of this elsewhere, but

there is something very simple and very grand in the whole transaction. God, *i.e.*, the Father where Christ is, shews Himself in no awful and alarming phenomenon. His presence is always the presence of God, but it is in calm and sanctified peace, as One, so to speak, on holy and familiar terms. Christ has clothed His majesty in favour, and He now points to the Son, if we may be permitted so to speak, as a Supreme common Object here. He rests in His love, as will be manifested hereafter. Therefore now "Hear Him," *i.e.*, Him come in flesh, for it is thus He has revealed the Father.

It is evident that this is presented to us as associated with prayer, as a place where, in ministry, the revelations and communications of God are specially made. The Lord went up there for that purpose, doubtless led of the Spirit with the Divine purpose to this effect, but in His own mind not so much looking for it, as led to pray. But we do not go further as to this at present here.

—34. There is in the intervention of God in the scene, the glory of God and the communion of the Father. Remark too this, that there is a separation between the intercourse of Moses and Elias with Christ, and the cloud. These speak of Jesus and His sufferings, Moses and Elias being then in the heavenly glory; Peter, James, and John form the earthly part of this millennial picture. But the cloud comes, and Moses and Elias are gone. Now the cloud was the glory above Israel, but the disciples enter into it. The Church is placed in what was above, and protected, and guided Israel, and being there the communion of the Father takes place, and Jesus alone is their Companion there. This makes the Church's place more distinct, and with the

whole scene more remarkable. The word ἐκεῖνους (they, those) must be noticed ; not that I question the above—the 'who' is important in another way.

Note in connection with ἐκεῖνους, and the force of it here, the use of it in 2 Cor. viii, 9, "Through His" (ἐκεῖνου) "poverty." 'Such an one as He,' is the force of it. Query, if it be not thus emphatic here in Luke.

I am quite disposed to think that "they" (ἐκεῖνους) in "as they entered into the cloud," refers to the disciples. It is the rhetorical or emphatic use of it. The cloud was the excellent glory, and they were afraid when they entered into it. It intimates the place of the Church. Moses and Elias disappear as witnesses, in the presence of the Son. Their testimony was of the earth earthy, though they would have their place in the glory and Kingdom. The Church they could not testify of. Now Christ was to be rejected as far as they had testified of Him—who had believed their report? But that just laid a ground for the Church's entrance into the heavenly glory. I do not mean that Moses and Elias will not be there ; they will in their place. But they could not testify of it, and as such did not at all bring men into it. Christ's death does those who have part with Him. The δὲ (and) I think connects the ἐκεῖνους (they) with the αὐτοὺς (them) in "overshadowed them" ; αὐτοὺς (them) merely states the persons (ἐκεῖνους). How wonderful that they should! God might be there, yea Jesus, but that they should was unlooked for, and beyond all their thoughts. It is in contrast with God and Christ. If this be not so, it must be taken that He spoke at the moment of their departing, and that the same cloud that overshadowed them the others entered into, and that the

overshadowing of the cloud did not make them afraid. The question much hangs on the force of ἐπεσκίασεν (overshadowed). And I think Exodus xl, 34, shows that it is the cloud descending and environing them. I cannot doubt a moment that the cloud represents that.

Ἐκεῖνος has the force, I judge, of something mentally marked out as distant from the present subject or natural condition of the mind, and hence notes what is elevated, or degraded, or terrible, or strongly marked and characterized to the mind. "That" answers to it pretty nearly in English. Only when definite character is expressed can it refer to the first person, and then it has ceased to be the normal I, as if I gave a horrible character of myself, and then said: Can you walk with that man—really a man of that character? So that the principle is unchanged. Hence contrast does come in, but it is one 'there' (ἐκεῖ) not 'here' (ὧδε). In the now in English vulgar, but still in German commonly employed, "there" we have the original force. 'That man there,' 'That there table.' But it seems to me that to say the cloud came and overshadowed the disciples, and they feared when the others entered into the cloud does not give any very strong or lucid sense. The departing seems to have been before the overshadowing of the cloud. Only it was while they were being separated from them that Peter spoke, and as he was speaking the cloud came, so that all was rapid. Still the separation was antecedent to the cloud, and if I am right as to ἐπεσκίασεν, there cannot I think be a doubt that ἐκείνους refers to the disciples. In Matthew, the expression of "a bright cloud" seems to confirm the thought that it was not a shadow over them. So even Luke i, 35 "shall overshadow thee."

—36. "And as the voice was heard, Jesus was found alone." The Law and the Prophets can give testimony to Jesus, but never with Jesus—that was Peter's wistless thought, to meet God through the three. Moses and Elias can also be in the glory with Him in the Kingdom, but when the Father comes forth to bear testimony, all is displaced but Jesus. His testimony too stands alone. He only can say "My"—"This is my beloved Son." But here indeed the Church is brought into special relationship of blessing and union, as the Father says, in His excellency as Father, "My beloved Son"—who totally different, though to the same truth, from all other testimony, so the Church, as blessed as united to Jesus, says, "My," and enters through grace, though lowly, as the Father is supreme in blessing, on the same ground with the Father, and says: "My," in union and in the love which knows it; this, through the Spirit, by whom we are one with Jesus. It is a great thing to say "My" in such a union.

Nothing can more perfectly present, or bring us present to the scenes he speaks of than Luke's descriptions. Our Lord, various and exercising as that in which He was exercised was, and apparently absorbing in its character, never was taken by surprise, always did that which was just fit to be done in the circumstances which presented themselves. His heart was always in its centre, *i.e.*, perfect with God, in His exercises towards others, not forcedly but in truth. Though trials might be passing as deep clouds over His inward man, and though pressed downward by the relentless wind, His way was ever held onward, yea, furthered by it, for His course was set right. So the saint.

—37. We see the Lord here, whatever the revelation of the glory which intimated their rejection of Him, pursuing the course of timely mercy expressing the sense of their condition and His own thought of leaving them, yet in sorrowful though judicial testimony still fulfilling as a hireling His day of faithful mercy, His disciples being under the same cloud of unbelief though loving Him, and no way engaged in opposition. The Son of Man did not find faith on the earth to rescue the then scene, though He might have disciples whom grace could carry into another. But "How long" ("until when") carried the sense of the dignity which belonged to Him, for in measure as His lowliness in grace was rejected, the dignity of His Person rises over it and breaks forth, and that magnificently. But while Jesus pursued His work of mercy for them, and all wondered at Him, He was in no sort diverted from pressing the condition in which He stood in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation; and this He presses on His disciples. "These words" (verse 44) were verse 23, and confirmed by what went before and followed, for these were His thoughts and instructions unbroken by any circumstance. The assistance afforded belonged properly to that scene—the deliverance of human nature—but proved their insensibility to that power, Divine power which His direction brought into display, and which they ought to have recognized, and recognizing, for it was Divine and therefore communicable, enjoyed the fruits of. For whatever power in God we are enabled really to recognize, we are enabled to enjoy the fruits of. They wondered at the mighty power of God, but did not see Him in Jesus, nor link the Divine power really with Him. Jesus returns, as we have seen, to His humiliation and rejection as Son of Man.

—41. A strange remedy for their perverseness, but one of mercy. Note that the ground on which the Lord speaks of leaving the generation, *i.e.*, putting an end to that manner of dealing with those with whom He was in relationship, was the disciples who had acknowledged Him in that position being unable to avail themselves of the power which the Lord exercised in it. It was not that evil was in the world, but that the testimony against the evil was unavailing according to the power which was available for its being rendered. The failure of the testimony in those who own the Lord brings the judgment. I see the same thing in Elias at Mt. Horeb. It was the failure of the testimony; he returns to God, as unable to do any more. This is a very serious point. The Lord expects us to act by the power which is thus at our disposition. Why continue it any longer if it is of no avail? However He maintains His grace in full exercise, until judgment actually comes in.

—43. How many passages are simple, if we would take them simply! But we take them compared with previous thoughts, or affixing these thoughts to them, and all is obscure. Simple faith does not wonder, for wonder is at that which is not expected. It was a matter of course with Him to do mercy and show Divine power, and He was unmoved by it or their wonder. But though they were astonished at His doings, having fulfilled the mercy, His mind occupied with that which was before Him, the application of what the Apostles witnessed to their minds, it was addressed perhaps to all His disciples, and they could not see its bearings. It might, without being specifically understood, have more deeply affixed in the minds of the then

Apostles the things which they had seen and connected them, though as yet they were ignorant about it, with the delivery of the Son of man into the hands of men. His death, it is to be remembered, had been the subject of His discourse in His Transfiguration—a wondrous scene! Enough to have made heaven astonished, yet bringing heaven and earth wonderfully near, indeed they are one in Him—they touch and they are one, if we did but know it.

—47. The rebuke was simple, deep and touching, and went to the very highest principles.

Practical directions often flow from deeper thoughts than are communicated; this is so when we are able to love perfectly others, not ourselves.

Observe the perfect calmness with which our Lord pursued the course of His mind in useful application of facts in ministry, when that had occurred which drew out the wonder of all around Him, though that occurrence claimed none less than Himself, and He had done it. The testimony of the glory and the sufferings should occupy us, though other things may interrupt, and we have to turn to them.

The Lord proceeds to apply the whole truth of the human rejection, but real exaltation of Messiah, to a great but simple moral principle of the Kingdom. They, resting still on their previous thoughts of Messiah, were reasoning who should be greatest in the Kingdom, the principle of death not being the least understood—Jesus, again evincing His Divine knowledge, turns it to human humbleness, for what is Divine is in grace in being humbled here, and what is human is right if it be humble before God, so proving its exaltation, *i.e.*, that it has entered into the Divine presence, and so proving what was really intelligent in it, and found its place there when the glory came.

There is no relation between the greatness of God and the greatness of man. The greatness of God is shewn towards man in grace, and this in His humbling Himself to behold and receive. Thus this grace and humbleness, and real value for Christ is shewn in receiving a child in His Name—the test of everything here, and while the world goes on all is inverted. The glory of God has found its place upon the Cross, and the gracious valuing the most despised and insignificant for Christ's sake is really receiving Him, and in receiving Him His Father's Delight, receives Him that sent Him, has this blessing and glory of showing attention to, so to speak, Christ in His rejection, and so fully satisfying the Father's heart and receiving Him. But this is now self-humiliation, and, while all things are thus inverted, he that is least, so humbled, and feeblest, in grace is really greatest. But there was a subtler form of self-exaltation, the association of the Name of Christ itself with us. "We saw one casting out devils in Thy name," and Christ's Name therefore was glorified clearly, "but he followeth not with us." Now in one sense that was wrong, for certainly following Christ was the right and best place. Still the mind and ways of God are greater than ours, the very feebleness of the disciples' faith who were right in being with Him, gave occasion, imposed a sort of necessity upon God of manifesting the glory of His Son by extraneous means, and this man, thus forbidden by them, had *de facto* in these circumstances (for the order and power of the Holy Ghost was not yet come) glorified the Name of Christ in a way they who did follow Him had entirely failed in doing, as we have just seen, for it is seldom, nay only when the full power of the Holy Ghost is at work, that the

exigency of Christ's glory is met; hence the evil of narrowness. Satan tries to avail himself of the weakness of those who are right by presenting the semblance of power which properly should be found in them, and operations of spiritual energy are found in irregular spheres of operation, and thus confusion and difficulty arise in judgment. The only remedy is the concentration of energy, such as we have seen it in the beginning of Acts, or the coming of the Lord to take the power Himself. But then God is faithful to His own little ones to keep them. Blessed be His Name! It is more remarkable here, because the disciples of Jesus had just failed in this. His Name be praised, in whom all power, and goodness, and grace is! The great point is that God must and will ever vindicate the glory of Jesus. If we are by the Holy Ghost in the way of that glory, we walk clearly and in power; if not, in uneasiness and confusion, though safe. I speak of the whole Body of Christ.

Here the judgment of Christ is founded on this, which occupies the whole of this part—His entire rejection and humiliation. He that was not against Him was for Him. Let us learn this, and keep ourselves in this lowliness; being in the place of it, the recognition of it is our strength. Patience in this humiliation next presents itself, for while our voluntary humiliation is the evidence of love, when in this, and subject to the trying consequences of it, the patient endurance of it is the test of the endurance and strength of the love, and the spirit in which it is done how far the flesh is in it in us, for the flesh may imitate the humiliation of Christ. Thus Christ accomplishing the blessed purpose of His love, the time of His receiving up being come, steadfastly sets His face to go to Jerusalem,

and pass through the necessity (for us) of death, to heaven above, seeing where love carried Him. If He had anything to say to us according to the order of God, He openly pursues His course; these wretched Samaritans, because He does so, refuse Him entrance into their village. But, His soul being fixed on His purpose of love, not on Himself, He passes on, in the execution of it, elsewhere, leaving the testimony that, whatever His power, He came to save (see critical note) "not to destroy men's lives." How perverse is the prejudice too of man! Because He was going in the full purpose of love, they would not receive Him. He set His face to go to Jerusalem, and because His face was so they would not receive Him. But, I repeat, the thing the Lord is pressing all through here is rejection and humiliation here, and that to instruct us. Blessed be His Name! But He did so by passing through it Himself. See, moreover, how James and John instantly assume power when it is to gratify self-importance. The Saviour exercises it when it is to shew mercy. How treacherous is the human heart! Again making the name of Christ's glory serve to the security of self-exaltation. "Wilt thou that we command?" I like the omission of the reason, though the other be true, for the Lord is dwelling, as habitually here, on the moral character of their walk before God. Elias came in judgment, or testimony of it righteously. They sought just to gratify their own importance and anger which self felt at the injury withal. Easy to affix Elias's name to this! And what ignorance of Christ's mission! He was not now clearing His floor by judgment but by suffering, and allowing others to sift, having the good grain through death for better blessing.

—48. "In my name" was in fact the point of the answer of our Lord. They were seeking their own name. This is the real secret trial of one's acts, and ought to be applied. Their error here was precisely the same. "He is great" in the sight of God, gave unlooked for instruction.

—49. The moral connection of this is evident. It is a supplemental lesson detecting, as that individual so this corporate, pride—both equally remote from the Spirit of grace. It was in Christ's Name he was casting them out; it was simply: "He follows not with us." It was their folly as well as error against Christ and their neighbour, for they had enemies enough, and all this bore witness to them, and helped them. But he who makes Christ the minister of his own pride above all mars his own prosperity, for the very energy, which would sustain him if he did seek Christ, he restrains by the name of that which, if he let it alone, it would support. Besides, he must recollect he sins against his neighbour who would have him relieved.

The drawing near of a day dissolves surrounding engagements of mind, and makes the heart beat towards it; this, I mean, is human nature. The Lord set His face firmly towards His suffering, for "for this cause" came He to this hour. It was suffering, but He set about to suffer. When His time came He set His face towards it not of His own will, not to suffer but to the place where He was to suffer—for He was to accomplish it at Jerusalem.

—53. O strange, ignorant, misguided man! What a reason for rejecting Him! He was rejected for that which He had to set His face firm to do, and that to save the world, for they knew nothing of what He was about. So the saint—if our eye be not to Him, we shall be explaining,

and think it hard. We must keep our very faithfulness to ourselves—nothing more important in ministry and conduct; if we act on high principles (and he who acts by faith does) few can understand them. The less is said, except for the Lord, the better—rather let nothing; yet openness with the saints is good.

This certainly is a wonderful sentence and to be much thought of. Meanwhile what should the saint do? Pursue his object, go to another object. Purpose, fixed purpose, and the mind occupied with it causes calmness, besides the direct duty of it. When the need of others claimed, He turned to it though it were an interruption, and then resumed His own needful task. When these rejected Him in His path towards it, He pursued His object in another way. His messengers might think of the village and the insult—He of the purpose of His heart. Also fixedness of purpose gives great room for the development of grace and patience, and grace sets one much towards one's purpose, and leaves the heart open to and undistracted from its higher motives, producing manifested consistency with those higher motives. His to mercy—was to save in purpose and result; they would have had Him destroy by the way. This is a rebukeable offence. Though we think we honour Christ, and mean to, let us take heed it is not ourselves. It was the same: "And he follows not with us," or akin to it at least. But dwell on the former part of this paragraph—reject the Saviour in the hour of His devotedness for us, for a prejudice—What a scene! And then see His, HIS way! Who shall honour Him rightly save One?

Note, the ground of the rebuke was the Spirit they were of *in praesenti*, for the frame of God's Spirit is always suitable

to the end which God proposes. An unsuitable spirit is always unsuitable to the end. We are always in the way of the end when we are really in the way of the Spirit. Is it not so? It was not for their forgetfulness of the end, but ignorance of the Spirit they were of, though he who was wise might understand it was inconsistent with the end.

The Lord proceeds to apply the consciousness of this principle of rejection to the circumstances of His disciples as associated with Him. His rejection and strangership was complete, and He had to bear it, and they must enter into company with Him on this principle. If one would say: "I will follow thee wherever thou goest," He could only say: I have nowhere to go to: you must take Me as a Stranger with no home at all; Israel has rejected Me. He assumes this title of Son of man distinctively here. It is One who has entered, on the part of God, into this place in which God sees man, the sons of men to be, as in this place, as of man before Him. The following instances press and enforce the entire and utter separation from all that could link or tie here, and the constancy of one who was quite dead to them in the course which another principle had introduced him into. The world was dead and ruined, it was finished. There was no more real relation between God and man livingly but in Christ. All was gone that sanctioned nature when Christ, the Head of blessing to it, was rejected. In the closest and most imperative claim it was only: "Let the dead bury their dead." That was all about it, and having begun on this principle there must be no relenting. It was evidence we were alive in their sense of it. The world was to be acted on by a principle which

was not in it, but which was by the death of Christ through the power of life in Him powerful to act on it.

—57 to end. This may be looked on as a sort of title to what follows. But I observe strong moral distinction. The first offered himself generally, without distinction: "Whithersoever thou goest." The Lord puts before Him the giving up everything, and leaves it there. The Lord "said to another, Follow Me"; he made difficulties, but the Lord did not put him but the hindrances off his mind, for Christ was supreme in it, so the Lord sees through weakness and strengthens by His command in it. He felt that Christ had claim, and so said: "Suffer me." He only needed the direction for himself, and he was sent. In the third we have a more mixed case. It was an offer to follow, but with that simplicity which recognised the remaining ties on itself. It was so far true, if not devoted, and said: "Suffer me." Nor was it merely however a supposed duty though not a real one. There was the lingering "my house" which shewed the remaining hold; he was, so far, mindful of the country whence he came out. This could not be.

Thus verse 51, begins a distinctly new head or division—the state of ministry and service of believership as sent into the world; thence to verse 62, the spirit of patience, and separation or cutting of worldly ties belonging to ministry, *i.e.*, the personal spirit and inward object or character.

I have of old remarked that in this chapter we are already at the last journey to Jerusalem. But it seems, as has been suggested to me, that that is kept in view on through to chap. xvii, although subjects are introduced without reference to chronological order. It is the web into

which the rest is woven. The evidence is thus : chap. ix, 51, x, 1, (x, 38. does not follow in order of time, but in xi we are at the close) xiii, 22, we are again on the road. The Lord seems to have gone slowly up ; at the end of xiii, He was not yet at Jerusalem. In xvii, 11, He is again on His way up. In xviii, 31, He is still on His way up ; in verse 35, He has got to Jericho, where in all the Synoptics the last scenes of His life begin. It is evident many things are introduced without its being at the time, but it seems it is all connected in recital with this last journey up.

Indeed, we have the whole Christian life in this chapter. First, He prays, then is in heavenly communion and glory, and then comes down in power into the midst of this crowded world and Satan's power. Such is ours.

Remark we have here the Divine power of Christ, the Divine Person, Jehovah, He gives power to work miracles, over all devils, sends out to preach, and, according to Ps. cxxxii, satisfies the poor with bread. Then forbids to be announced any more as the Christ of God (with men, only the subject of opinion) and then takes the name of Son of man to suffer, and enter into His glory. He is praying, and then transfigured, and reveals both the Kingdom and the Father's house. For the present, He manifests Divine power and grace, but is the rejected Son of man. Our place is the cross, and self-judged in every respect. Compare this chapter and John xii ; only the last much more the blessed Lord's part in it personally, Luke much more probing our hearts and all that the Cross judged in us, so that there should be no self but a new life. Even in our taking up our cross there is more of following Christ in John, more its practical moral bearing in Luke.

There are three things in this chapter—the fellowship in the glory, the Kingdom in its heavenly and earthly part, together with the personal relationship of the Son to the Father; 2ndly the perfect grace of Christ on earth, and that however faith may fail in us, He is ever in the power of grace for need; 3rdly the searching out of self all that hindered true association with the glory as regards relationship to Christ, and then service.

In this way too the end of the chapter has a very powerful application, beginning with verse 43 (comp: 23 *et seq:*) as the groundwork of all, and then self-judged in all forms, and what death-to-it service implies.

The chapter taken, as a whole, has a very complete character. In verse 12, He shews Himself the Jehovah of Ps. cxxxix. Then alone as the dependent Man, all manner of opinions in the people, His disciples own Him as the Christ. They are not to tell it, for He is going to suffer as Son of man; they must take up their cross consequently, if they follow Him. Man's soul and life or gain here contrasted, and their being owned by Himself when He came in Son of man's glory, Son of God's, and with His angels as Jehovah. Then the Kingdom is shewn them. The saints seen in glory on earth like Him, with Him, conversing with Him according to the mind and affections of God. But, as to His Person, all disappear, and He is alone Son of the Father. That is the visible Kingdom and Glory, but there is more here—they enter into the cloud, the excellent glory (the Shekinah, the cloud of Israel). This is the heavenly saints' own place, not the Kingdom; incredible to a Jew that men should enter that cloud! But then Christ comes down to the crowd of the world,

and Satan's power, finds unbelief in His own disciples so that they could not avail themselves of the present power (so now). This leads to closing the whole scene (as noticed elsewhere) but Christ, whatever the unbelief of His own, leading to closing the dealing they could not use the power of, is infallibly there in power and grace wherever there is faith enough to express a want. God's power is wondered at, if Satan's is pretty much borne with as an accustomed and hopeless affair. The Lord brings them back to the Cross, and then applies it to self in all its shapes of self-seeking or hindrance of service, as also noted elsewhere. So that we have the Cross, Kingdom, and heavenly state, glory, then Christ's grace sure, whatever unbelief is aroused, but every part of self tested and judged in every shape it assumes ; and so it must be.

The historical progress of Luke is ix, 51, xvii, 11, xviii, 31, xix, i. Chap. xviii, 35, is merely "When He came into the neighbourhood of Jericho" contrastive, but not specifying the moment.

From this chapter begins, not the simple setting forth of certain characters and qualities in Christ, as previously, but the application or address of these to Israel, so as to test them, only in grace and testimony, the dealing with Israel on the footing of them.

To return for a moment; in chap. vii, we have blessing to Gentiles through the faith of one who owns His Divine power over all creation, and next His power over death. This was a kind of power which clearly took it out of all dispensational connection with Israel. This display of Divine presence and necessary superiority to the bounds of Israel and over death is brought to the ears of John, and

leads to a distinct declaration of the whole state of things. John individually must receive Him, like others, by the testimony given, and Jesus gives testimony to John instead of receiving it from him. He is His own Witness, and to John too, and then Israel's state is shewn, and the moral condition, and submission to God's ways which led to receiving Jesus. But the state of the men of the generation is brought clearly out, but the children of Wisdom justify Wisdom (justify God). The picture of each is given in the history that follows. He whom the generation could see nothing in, wisely settling He was no prophet, gives peace to the sinner as He detects all that was in the Pharisee's heart. And which was lovely and in good estate—the poor woman or the Pharisee?

Chap. viii singularly unfolds the consequent state of things. The Lord gathers round Himself these children of Wisdom out of the nation, in devotedness to Him (the woman) and service the Twelve. He shows He was the Sower, *i.e.* came by the word, not for fruit in the nation. The mysteries of the Kingdom of God belong to His disciples; the nation (others) are only blinded by the utterance of them. But then the enlightening the disciples was to give light by them, and they must take heed how they hear; they would be judged accordingly, and everything would be brought out to light. If it were only hearing, it would be taken away from them. Thereon He rejects His birth-ties with Israel, and owns only the fruit of the Word. Cast into storms by their accompanying Him, they should trust simply. They were with Him. Was He and His work to perish? Then what He was doing in Israel was gathering to a right mind, to sit at His feet.

The unclean would hurry themselves under Satan's power to destruction, and so Israel did. It was not the time to shut up Satan in the abyss; that will come. Nor yet the time to take away the Remnant who had been blessed; they were to return to the place whence Christ had been rejected, to be witnesses of the power which had delivered themselves. As to delivering Israel, further, the order was this. He comes into the crowd when called to heal, but on the way blessing is had only by faith. In fact the daughter of Israel was dead. Still He was blessing in the power of resurrection, and He would raise her to life again. This closes this special presentation of His Person. In chap. ix, and on to verse 24 of chap. x, He is dealing with Israel in view of His rejection, and afterwards, in various parables and discourses, urges it on the people and disciples, and shews the path of faith, and grace towards and in man.

It is interesting to see how the change of dispensation connects itself with the state of souls. John comes as prophet with the testimony of fulfilment of prophecy. But now Christ, having given His own witness of Himself in grace to Gentiles and in power over death itself, does not receive testimony from John but gives it to him, and John comes in, in personal faith, as others do. But further, to meet man's need in grace, and detect man's false pride and glory, to put down flesh, He comes in utter humiliation. John's testimony is left behind; Divine goodness and power gives witness to itself (vii, 22) but in such a state that flesh could not brook it, "Blessed be he whosoever shall not be offended in me." This manifestation of God reaches conscience on one side, and on the other gives perfect confidence in love. Conscience made, by grace, children of

Wisdom. They owned God was right in His judgment of fruitless trees, and where flesh saw a devil they saw the true testimony of God as to themselves. When perfect love came down to their low estate, it was just what they wanted. They justified God, in that Wisdom was justified of her children. So the poor woman ; and the stupid Pharisee who could not discover a Prophet when God was there and just because He was there. But it led farther to forgiveness, salvation by faith, and peace from the Lord Himself. John had come to the highest place of those who could be connected with Christ after the flesh, but the least in the Kingdom, when the work would be accomplished and men in relationship with God by Christ, was greater. The promise fulfilling passed away—Israel would not have it—John who announced it had to believe on other ground—but it was only to make way for Divine manifestation of grace to sinners which would triumph over death itself. The confidence of the sinner's heart won to God by the manifestation and exercise of perfect love towards it. It was not Christ with Israel, but sinners with Divine love leading to the answer of peace.

God can never accommodate Himself to the sin or to the righteousness of man. But the perfection, revelation of Himself in grace, detects the falseness of the one and meets the extremest evil of the other. But in order to this detection, and to this perfect grace, He humbles Himself. Man avoids gross evil perhaps, and then gratifies his selfishness as much as he can. God comes with perfect grace as the Friend of publicans and sinners, but in such grace that man must give up his pride, his self-importance, his greatness, his vanity, all the glorying of flesh, but

gets what is blessed in God. This tests him. All grace and power are shewn, as in chap. vii, 22. God gives witness of Himself, but verse 23 : "Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me." Where conscience is reached the soul justifies God as to oneself, in His utter judgment of man, of evil, and Him gladly in grace in Christ. It really is the perception of the full evil of sin by the attractive perception of the full blessedness of Christ, of the manifestation of God in Him. The result, as an answer, is in verses 48, 50.

My impression is that in Luke ix, the disciples are invested with the testimony and power of the Kingdom (the powers of the world to come, in testimony) but that they do not enter into the full character of Christ. Though entrusted with the power, and so, as deputed, exercising it, they cannot by their own faith, shewing what man is. Christ does, and shews Jehovah power. Peter owns Him, when the nation were speculating, as the Christ; but this testimony was over, they were to tell it to no man. But here we have nothing of the Church built on earth, but the Son of man suffering, and the saving the soul of all importance; hence, as to this world, the cross is to be taken up. Then the glory of the Kingdom is shewn, and Christ is to be heard, not Moses or Elias. But again, even the disciples could not by their own faith work Christ's work. Hence His staying was over. In the previous part it was : "Give ye them to eat;" they counted the loaves. So here, they could not cast out the evil spirit. Christ did, still in grace, but He presses His rejection and leaving them. He is Son of man. They would be great; they must be little as a child. In all that follows, while self-seeking in flesh is detected, the Lord is also bringing out the

rejected character in which He and the Kingdom must be taken up, while He is really come to save men's lives, and the urgency therefore of the work, love finding in the state which rejected it an additional motive; see 50, 56, 58, 60, 62. The mission of the seventy bears the stamp of this stronger than that of the Twelve, and more urgent; chap: x, 11-16. Yet it is beautiful to see how Divine love can see much to do in such a sphere, though few are possessed with it so as to labour accordingly. Yet (x, 21,) the Lord fully recognizes Divine grace revealing the blessing come to babes, and hiding it from the wise and prudent. Another thing we see, that in the midst of the display of the power of the Kingdom, the better thing was not that, but that their names were written in heaven. But the Lord goes yet farther here, beyond the present power of the Kingdom, and shews what was the key to His rejection, and the special blessing of the disciples. The Son has all things delivered to Him of the Father, and no one knows Him but the Father Himself, nor the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son reveals Him. This leaves all the Church-revelation, however true, behind, and this was what was really going on. The Christ was no more to be told of, the Son of man was to suffer, but the Father was revealed by the Son whom no one knew. How we see the consciousness the Lord had, here in His rejection, of the blessing He carried with Him (23, 24)! Doubtless this must have been deep joy to Him. I do not think this was any particular part of what is before, but His own estimate of what they had received, for had they received Him as Christ they had received all, for He was so presented. So was the Son revealing the Father, that if that was a hindrance they would not have received Him at all, even as the Christ (see

remarks on chap. vii). What follows with the lawyer is an evident testimony to the change from law to grace, and the way this looks at everything. The law gives the full rule how to have life. Man is willing to justify himself, conscious he has not fulfilled it. Christ shews that we are to be neighbour in grace to those who need it, not ask who is it according to law, so that its exigencies apply; we are to act from grace. Verse 38 begins a new subject; what we have been speaking of closes here.

Note, not only the association of the saints with the Lord, but, above that, His association with, and owning by the Father. He was here up in the Mount—Himself in glory—and in the conscious owning above, glory by the Father alone, His Son in this way. It was a refreshing entrance, to the recognition of others, into this glory, and title, and joy. In verse 37, He descends, down again into the crowd where He had assented to walk. He walks in the power of the glory He was to enjoy, even when not in the present sensible display of it. Alas! We do not. And the disciples get classed as to this with the generation, at least are hidden by it. But grace flows unhindered; at power everybody wonders, but He teaches the disciples the Cross; and the residue of the chapter is the judgment of the various phases of selfishness and nature, which flow from not seeing the glory and applying it. Jesus being therefore all, and this glory in hope, and so using, and walking according to it in the denial of self by the Cross—individual greatness, common aggrandisement as Christ in a carnal way, we are entitled to be of one spirit with Him. Then separatedness of heart, and self-deception as to it a hindrance when Christ calls.

Chapter X.

The mind of the Lord carries altogether here the impression of a closing scene, and Christianity is come into the world with this, and has never lost it. It received it in the world by the death of Christ. Yet, while the purpose of it was in His mind, only inducing the energy of action on the mass around Him, so for His followers He felt too how few with the energy the emergency called for were the labourers in such a field. What a lesson from the Lord thus going away! All this part of this Book is deeply interesting in its practical power as resting on the rejection of Jesus, and His consciousness of this, and the character this stamped on His lot, and those with Him. No hanging of hands, no flagging of love—Blessed be His Name! The evil around Him but drew forth the energy of His love by its need. He came to work in love. The sorrowful state around Him, shewn in His rejection, was occasion of more earnest service. His record was on high, and, indeed, how fruitful was the harvest though it was not to Him here! May we, I scarce dare to say may I, so walk! How blessedly high is the Saviour above us, yet how near to us! And everything in this our joy, even when we are so short of it surely! At least it is my food and my solace thus to hold communion with Him, to know His ways, to follow His steps, to know Himself and hold communion with Himself in them all. Most blessed Lord! Still, though a closing message of mercy, it was a closing message. The character too of the service is marked in connection with His now manifest rejection. It is not

sending to His loved Israel, but: "Go ye, behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves." Nothing could be more marked than this. There was conscious rejection, but asserted and maintained authority with judgment on those who refused it in those sent by Him.

In this chapter both the present service of Christ, conclusive as to Israel as then before God, and the entirely new thing, both morally and in the Person of Christ, and in grace, is very distinctly brought out. The seventy are sent out with definite judgment resting on those who reject them. It was rejecting Christ, and rejecting Him who sent Him; and He pronounces final woe on the cities where He had wrought. But the seventy were to rejoice, not in the power they had even from Christ then, which prevailed over the power of Satan there—a power which marked to Christ's foreseeing eye the total destruction of his power, and which would be conferred on them even then, so that all his power, while it did exist, could not hurt them. It was not in this they were to rejoice, but that their own names were written in heaven. It was their heavenly portion which was their true joy; in verse 21, this is referred to the good pleasure and sovereign grace of the Father, but connected with the given glory of Christ associated with the unfathomable and Divine glory of His Person, and the revelation of the Father by Him to others. Yet they were then enjoying what prophets and kings had desired to see and had not seen, and, indeed, though the full heavenly blessing was not come, there was the revelation of the Father by the Son. Finally, the essence of the Law in man, as regards God and man, is brought out in answer to the lawyer, as the way of life if man kept it,

but on the shrinking of the conscience from the test by a subterfuge, another principle is brought out—our acting in grace according to the pattern of Christ who has manifested that grace on earth to be, not to have, a neighbour.

In this and the following chapter we are still on the rejection of Israel, but it takes not a dispensational but a moral and individual character—the word of God valued and received, prayer, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. This moral operation is as yet viewed as within Israel in the Remnant, the disciples, but as not to be confined to it. The light thus lighted up was to shine up. First, Mary has the good part, the word—not the world even to receive Christ. Next, prayer as then taught, but the millennial parts left out, and its general moral demands retained, further the value and power of it, and the promise of the Spirit as a result. Then the chapter turns to the Kingdom being come and blasphemously rejected, but the question was finally at issue in the Person of Christ, and the state of the Jews depicted, but left in its moral application to man. But there was more blessing in hearing His word than in any natural nearness to Him. Jonas himself is then given as a sign not of death and resurrection, but by his preaching in Nineveh. The light set up in Christ was for all that came in to see, but then the moral state of the individual was tested by it—the eye might be single or evil. On the one hand, as with the Pharisees and many now, the light was darkness, but where the light was received it was absolute light, not only light was there, but, received, it lightened everything, no part was dark. Then the Pharisees, cleaners of the outside not the in, and covetous are denounced as are the lawyers. There is a

present application of the great principles spoken of. Chap. xii continues the same subject, only shewing the principles which are to govern the discipular Remnant in the testimony they are to give, and the result on Christ's return, and then from verse 49 to the end, the present state of the case as to Himself, and between Himself and Israel, and their judgment.

1—16. This gives the character of the ministry itself, and its consequences; but, 17—42, there is something higher than the ministry of, *i.e.* the glory, character, and spirit of reception of the Kingdom of which it was the harbinger; this introduced in 17 to 21, on the consideration of the object of the work on the return of the Seventy. The real truth of its glory, and the as yet hidden mystery of godliness (yet not to faith altogether) and the manner of its revelation, 22—24. But in truth being such, its life flowed down from and reflected that which revealed it, or which it was, God manifest in the flesh, and thus we find its moral character drawn out (25—37) the title which it gave, being a supreme revelation of God restoring all things, to absolute and soul-claiming attention, and that God recognised and approved this attention to it. 'Ye are idle,' having no claim upon faith, but that God in Christ claimed all, and that it was a good choice, because the old world, and all its formal duties had lost their power and were, in truth, of unbelief and rejected, not of that world to come whereof it spake, 38—42.

—3. I suppose the "I" (ἐγὼ) has force here. At any rate "I send you" is the great basis. The Lord knew what He was doing when He was sending them; He knew it was "As sheep in the midst of wolves." Their knowing He

knew this disarmed it if they felt the force of that "I." It was not merely: Ye will be, but "I send you as" etc. It was a supreme commission.

—7. Experience assures me that there are the deepest laid principles of abstraction from the world in all this, which nothing but the fulness of the former part would carry through, or the gift of grace suited to such office.

—9, *et seq.* These are displays of judicial and providential dealing, but the whole course of events is not a present display, nor are the circumstances of the display the ultimate result. The moral trial of individuals is quite distinct from display of character in judicial conduct in dispensations. If Tyre had such it would have repented, but Tyre had not; such were given to those who never repented by them at all. This is a question of judgment and display, not of individual salvation. Still the Lord asserts His supremacy in them. But responsibility for ultimate judgment is connected with the presentation of the means, or their absence, which are the occasion of judgment inflicted for instruction of others (see verse 14), *i.e.*, had Tyre repented it would have been as Nineveh, spared in judicial government as a city, not the souls saved necessarily thereby. But this was not the suitable order of the Divine government. But when the miracles and testimony of the Lord were presented, it became personal sin, their rejection, and thus the responsibility to be met "in that day" incomparably greater, though Tyre and Sidon may be under condemnation as sinners. Thus, while perfection of righteous wisdom will be displayed at the end, the all important principle of supremacy, Divine supremacy, is maintained by the way, and yet signal instances, as He sees fit, given of the just

righteousness and indignation against evil, of the character of Him who is supreme, so as to instruct and act morally on men. This is a most important instruction. The mind of man is narrow and knows not how to bring these things together, but supremacy in wisdom does. Man must act finally in justice, if he acts at all, but God has reserved "that day" for the display of His judgment on individual conduct against Himself, and individual righteousness. But He has exercised a providential government, and given multiplied displays here of a patience marvellous to behold, and a righteousness never acted against with impunity, though the time of judgment be His own. The Church can apply within its sphere, partially without it as knowing all things, the ground and ordering of this judgment—without, it assumes to man the form of providence by no means without witness in conscience, when that is not hardened, but having no settled rule to them because of the blindness of their hearts. Of either within or without Satan serves himself to assume the dispensation of it to the one, and to cloud the love of God to the other, alike false in his ways in both. Judgment may come both here and hereafter, and one be significative of the other; so Capernaum is denounced. The whole is a high scene of the supreme judgment of God, and dignity of Christ breaking forth in it, though in the form of a Servant, for, note, though able He never exercised it here, but told those who would: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of," for He came in the Spirit of loving gracious service and Himself never went out of it. But He, as we have said, could not be hid. And note, Christ in His glory and rejection bringing in the whole moral display of God's nature, and the grounds of

judgment, enables the Church taught and fully apprehensive of this by the Holy Ghost, to apprehend the whole of this. The Lord thus instructing them, for it is interested in all His glory, whether a full moral test of the heart as a sign spoken against, or judging Tyre and exercising providential government because of its pride, Christ is the Interpreter as the Centre of it all, and we have the mind of Christ; our attainments in this are another question. The nations too are all guilty, so that He can exercise judgment on them all. The specialties of His government, His giving them times of humbling so as to spare, and enable Him righteously to exercise it are all matters of grace. His own nation is the great example and public centre of this government. The Lord give such humiliation to foolish nations for their mercy and good, for He is gracious! And it may be He has a people among them, wherefore they should be spared a little.

We are to observe here He extends His government, on Israel's rejection of Him, over the heathen nations, and those of the land even before Israel. It so happens here that they are within the bounds, but it is a matter of principle, and Tyre and Sodom just represent the commercial human pride and natural wickedness of man. But all was centred now in: "He that rejects me." This was the point of evil, all hinged on owning or rejecting Jesus in His messengers, for all manifest authority and Divine beauty was in Him, in Man.

We may remark as to the whole of this commission that it is one clothed with the authority of the Lawgiver and Prophet of the Jewish people, to whom whosoever should not hearken was to be cut off from among his people. He sends them out with a final claim (in mercy) on the

attention and acceptance of His people, secures authoritatively their provision, sanctions their message by the works He enables them to do, and announces that whoever receives them receives Him, they preceding Him as heralds making plain the way for Him, He following, for if He went up to suffer it was to be received up into glory really. He went up with Divine will, Divine glory and Divinely exercised power, power which as Divine He could commit authoritatively to others, and evince the riches of the grace in which He gave Himself. By the glory and dignity which was in Him so going up to give Himself up the Divine glory proved, as we have often seen, in proportion as He was rejected in His mission as Messiah, the glory and dignity of His Person. His Divine glory broke forth, content to be received as Messiah in a certain sense, rejected in that, "He could not be hid." The whole of this savours of authority—a final message—if you will not receive it "We shake off the dust of our feet, but," nothing less "be sure of this, the Kingdom of God is come nigh to you." It was the present manifestation and acting in the Kingdom of God as a final witness in mercy, in the dignity of mission as a last thing, not merely the patience of service. Hence moreover it was a separating work. It was who receives it —well; woe to him who does not. It would practically separate the sons of peace.

There is something very peculiar in the character of this mission, and altogether most blessedly suited to the dignity, grace and authority of the blessed Lord. How far in vindication of that authority it may be used in principle is clearly a matter of special judgment, and it is only in special cases that it has its appli-

cation at all where for the securing of Christ's glory and authority we may be found (and vindicating it for the preservation of the feeble against the rejection of the hostile) to act on a principle of, in testimony, judicial separation. The judgment on cities is clearly Israelitish, and of the character of Divine government, not ministerial service, and this characterizes the whole. He acts *en roi* (like a King) with His people, though patient grace may have characterized the action, and what brought Him there. On some, the scene of His labours which He was now leaving, He pronounces sentence Himself, thus showing His title, power and righteous judgment now in declaring the distinctive judgment of these different places. Divine knowledge, competency, and title, the announcement of the judgment of God, of His knowledge before the time arrives, and yet all this done as a Servant! It is wonderful to see the Divine Person of the Lord thus brought into the place of humanity, and yet seen in it. It stands alone, the one great Object for eternity when God even is all in all. Note too, it is not at the beginning of His course the Lord says: "Woe" ever; it is the result of rejecting evil. The Lord also authoritatively closes the door on them in saying (a strong encouragement to them among "the wolves") "He that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me despiseth Him that sent me."

It is, as I have said, a supreme commission; would this in any sort apply to the Gentiles? "When I sent you forth" etc. "But now I say unto you." "While I was with them in the world," in this Christ was not indeed outwardly shewing or using the power which He had as Lord over all, though He left them to go "As lambs in the midst of

wolves." It was a partial exercise of it. He had not put Himself into the trial of the crucifying in weakness yet, where He could indeed have prayed, but "How then" etc., Therefore also it was among Jews, not in the world. But the Spirit witnessing in the world is a Witness and not a Governor, *i.e.* Christ, as in Spirit in the world. He may control providences to the end, and make "All things work together" etc., but it is a different thing from the presence of His Person in the world—this the world has turned out, and the Spirit is a Witness of the Saviour in heaven. Therefore all things, save grace in the heart of His, are as though there were no Christ save to him; he must be "All things to all men" in the activity and independence of the Spirit, if by any means he might save some, and "Know how to be full and to be hungry," to carry a purse and be without one, and do all things through Christ strengthening him. I have noticed that I do not think miracles so properly belong to Gentiles, *i.e.* to the system; they are the witness of God upon earth. But this was not the cause of rejoicing, but that in which the (Gentile) Church fully participated, their names written in heaven.

The exercise of this power fully verified the position of authority and grace from which it emanated; the devils were subject to the disciples through His Name. The Lord recognised, with the clearest sense of joyful power, the principle of power thus exercised by them. He saw prospectively—not His reception as Messiah simply now, but the secret cause of all His rejection broken, and man's deliverance wrought—Satan fall from heaven like lightning, the consequence of rejected power and mercy breaking forth in its higher sphere of exercise in the

power in which He, Jesus the Lord, could delegate it to these simple ones. He sees the whole perspective display of this power; he who in heaven wrought the mischief, and rejection on the earth, fell before the display of power and the exercise of the dignity of that place into which He, Jesus, was cast by that rejection. The Lord breaks forth, as it were, for the comfort of the disciples, in the consciousness of this—comforting them, we may say, with the comfort wherewith He Himself was comforted of God—still here emptied in that the display of the power was through others, strengthening them in their faith on His rejection in the lower or Messiah sphere of His power and glory, in which He was to be rejected and crucified. He tells them strengthened by this experience that He will give them authority over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall wrong them. How completely we see here Jesus the Source of full power over, and setting aside all the power of Satan over the world, as in the heavens! This was true and blessed. It will be just the full blessing of the Millennium, the full ample display of this, for he will be bound in the bottomless pit, and the world blessed by his exclusion from the heavens—they not to be regained. And this would be, in title and comfort to them, displayed in the disciples. But He carries their minds higher to where His heart—Blessed be His Name!—was above it all, and where He would carry in His rest of love theirs with Him, a place of rest and of holiness, a place of acceptance and favour, where it was not question of superiority over evil but enjoyment of good—the place of His Father's delight, where holiness and joy unhindered and unsullied had their dwelling place, their fulness and their

home. There His heart was, whatever His service, and there He would carry theirs. And surely the Church's greatest joy and delight is not even dominion over a world restored from Satan's destructive and corrupting dominion, and being the instrument of blessing to it—most blessed as that is, for it is being given to participate in the exercise and administration of Christ's love, still less in the exercise of power over evil which is here the point—but in the delight in the Father's love, infinitely blessed as to Jesus Himself, and in Jesus' love full of the devoted tenderness in which He has brought us to Himself, for we are of God, in the highest heavenly sense partakers of the Divine nature, children of the Father, the Spouse of Christ, our communion even now with the Father and with Him. And all this higher than, as indeed the blessed source of our participation in the dominion of blessedness which He the holy, just, and mighty One exercises over the world. This is the display to others of the certainty of what we enjoy there ; see John xvii, "That the world may know." Holiness and love any way, and the Father's delight in us are more than the exercise of power. But note the unalterable perfection of Christ our blessed Lord.

The power was in the title of Christ's Person. The full display of it was before Him in that word : " I beheld Satan like lightning fall"; but there was a joy in eternal favour more than in the exercise of power. The Lord then proceeds to His own joy in the righteous economy of grace, righteous because the vindication and the justification of the Divine glory. While He pointed them to that higher and better joy which in Divine grace is theirs, He rejoices in Spirit that these things, even the full exercise of beneficent power

in His Person, from the Lord of heaven and earth, are hidden from the pride and haughtiness of human reason and understanding, and revealed in grace to babes, the witness of sovereign grace to them, the source and subject of joy and boundless thankfulness. So it seemed good in His sight. We still remark here the blessed Lord maintaining the place of Servant, but the revelation therein, and that He might effectuate sovereign beneficence, He addresses: "Father" as "Lord of heaven and earth." Thus withal extending the sphere of this blessing to be accomplished in the casting down of Satan, He thanking the Father for what seemed good in His sight, while the blessed character of the way of it was felt and enjoyed by Jesus as the blessing and joy of His little ones, as well as the sovereign pleasure of Him who sent Him, the double joy of the Son a Servant in His house. But in very deed the glory of His Person was just maintained by this. Was He rejected by the Jews, guilty as they were in it—yet the truth was,—it was that the glory of His Person as the Divine Son was such that none could understand Him but the Father. And by virtue of His union with the Father, still the glory of His Person, none but He could know the Father, and he to whom He, the Son, should reveal Him; and this last was just His gracious, blessed service with the disciples. Messiah they ought to have received, but indeed the Son none knew, and the Son He really was. Then looking at this second sphere, the revelation of the Father, who they said was their God, none knew Him but He, and He alone thereon could, as He did, reveal Him to the little ones. The passing of the heart of Christ, on His rejection, over the whole scene of His portion with the little ones and with

the Father, to His glory as to the place Christ took, but really revealing the excellency and glory of His Person and place, is of the deepest and, to us, most blessed interest. How are we let by this infinite grace of the Holy Spirit into the workings of His heart! And what a place to be admitted to towards His little ones before the Father, and Himself the humbled Centre of the whole display! It is most blessed. Who is like or can be compared with Him who is our Joy, and Excellency, and Crown?

The Lord having passed from the exercise of power to their place in heaven as the more blessed part, and His Spirit having gone through the whole scene of what formed the basis of the Gospel revelation—future blessedness, the breaking forth of His Person and glory on the Jewish rejection—returns in quiet care for His little ones, the poor of the flock. "Turning to His disciples privately He said, Blessed are the eyes that see the things that ye see," *i.e.* the intelligent perception of Messiah's power thus revealed, for indeed it involved all the rest over which His Spirit had passed in prospect; but He brings them back in joy to the present object of their faith (whatever the result in His mind) for this actual manifestation of Messiah had been the object of longing desire to many a prophet and king who had passed from the scene below without the accomplishment of their ardent wish, blessed, honoured, as they were, but not as these. Such is the effect on the soul on well-understood rejection! It is but the breaking down of what hinders the full development of the glory of the counsel of God, and in us would hinder the enjoyment of it, the tearful entrance into the spirit and glory of another world.

—21. "In spirit" (τῷ πνεύματι) as a Man. In all this

Christ is speaking in His prophetic spirit as a Man, rather as the Son subject than Christ governing, and accordingly immediately afterwards He says: "All things are delivered to me" etc. Is not therefore as a witness to man of principle Christ more excellent in this subjection, though the glory be due? It is in this the perfection of righteousness, and moral truth of the great principles of Eternal Life and relationship were shewn.

—23, 24. "Those things;" what things? Is it not evident that the hope of Christ upon earth was the first object of prophets and kings? What more could they look for? It is hardly necessary to remark that this is no question of how a man is to be saved.

—25. This is the state and condition suitable to the direct Kingdom and administration of Christ; one of principle too, not of party, as under Him. Meanwhile it is exercised on principle in respect of evil, in mercy. The Lord well knew how to draw the conduct suited to His Kingdom and ministry.

So, connected with verse 24, the connection is thus: the great character in which Christ was manifested as Christ, "All things are delivered to me of my Father" (it was not seeing the miracles, but the Person, the power from which the miracles flowed, for the miracles they did, and were bid not to rejoice in that, and the world saw—it was this taken in all together, the conference of power in Christ and the saving of the people—it was indeed to man singular, but rejoicing to Christ that the revelation of it was to the poor and simple, it was well pleasing to the Father) and this as connected with the revelation of the Father—and of this He says: "Blessed are the eyes" etc; compare John i, 14,

and Matt. xiii, 11, *et seq.*, and observe the places they come from. Then compare the case of Thomas and 1 Peter i, 8. Then come the great principles of the state which Christ dispensatorily establishes—the restitution of all things, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God" etc. The everlasting principles of God's character, as exhibited in relationship to Him now, as we have seen, the joy and what was our portion meanwhile while we wait for it, so as these are their principles on the perfectness of God's character, so is it manifested in the midst of evil by shewing mercy on them that hate us, as John i, 16.

The Lord returns on the circumstances, as we have seen, denoting the breaking up of the dispensation and passage into another, into the moral principles and relationship which the law contained, and, sanctioning the great eternal principles contained in it, as the form and unchangeable character of Eternal Life in its perfection and nature, the love of God and one's neighbour—on the self-justifying enquiry of a bad conscience, breaks down the whole narrowness of fleshly exaltation by the law, and introduces the principle and display of sovereign goodness manifested in Man on the evident failure of all that was right and gracious in those who had the privileges the law externally attached as a form or dispensation, and presents a Samaritan as an example unanswerably to a lawyer. In a word, while sanctioning the eternal principle of truth between God and the creature in righteousness—the kernel hidden in the law—breaks down the form which ministered to human pride by the exhibition of what was, beyond controversy, intrinsically goodness in a stranger in contrast with the heartlessness of formal privilege. Nothing could

be more clear, more definite in its purpose, or more conclusive than this of the Lord, and yet it broke up (with the sanction of its contained righteousness) the whole form and principle of the law, but by bringing in God in goodness where man had failed in righteousness, bringing in Substance instead of form. So the power of the Holy Ghost always does. "The Kingdom of God is not in word but in power," and the Spirit of love characterises its ways, for God who is Love is revealed in it, and He does not wait for goodness on the pride of men's forms. How blessed when God is thus brought in! And how perfect in His ordering of all things! The way of righteousness fully preserved, the pride of distinctive circumstance completely laid low before the true goodness of God!

—27. Some are apt to take the second member of the great commandment as though it was a measure of the extent to which love to our neighbour was to go, and that we need not love him better, but if we thus weigh the obligation we shall be apt to lose the very principle wholly, and in essence, which we seek thus to limit to make self-love the judge of how far we are to go in kindness to our neighbour, instead of a holy urgency by which another is identified (not contrasted in obligation) in interest with oneself in unity of love. But it seems to me, though it be a simple practical direction, yet it teaches us the moral measure of love towards man or our neighbour, while it gives a regulating principle when we love God. It is unlimited in its nature. The object is infinite, the debt is infinite. It is an entire devotedness fluent in obligation, which in duty takes its measure from the nature and essential supremacy of God, and His claim over us from His

being our God and all in all, which none can express, but the believer alone can apprehend. Whereas thus to love man would be so far from excellent that it would be idolatry. Man is to be loved as man, yet with a perfect love according to its nature, such as every man must bear to himself, and when Love exists it identifies our neighbour not in necessity but in unity of interest with ourselves, and we seek his good with a perfect heart. But it is in its nature essentially different from love to God, in that God is so from man, and every affection follows the nature, and, if a holy affection, is perfectly and precisely suitable to the nature and character of the object of it. We may remark the facility of our Lord's transition from the summit, as it were, and fulness of contemplation and, so to speak, Divine philosophical enunciation of truth, to the practical dealing with the lawyer's reluctant conscience. It was one thing to Him.

—38. That these are the general moral instructions of Jesus is manifest. The general division begins when the Seventy returned.

—38—42. The different reception of Christ by one given to choose Him and the word by Him as their part, and one who receives Him indeed to the saving of their soul, being renewed as to evil and alineation from God, but not as to be lost to the world and brought away into the new Kingdom (in a measure everlasting Kingdom) from self, is here strongly marked. And how deeply, and how perfectly shewn! Yet Martha was a believer, and loved the Lord.

We have here the distinctive privilege of the saint. Jesus, separated from all here into which, in gracious

fulfilment of the ancient promises of God, He had thrown Himself, leads the way in sanction to undivided attention to the interests of the heavenly Kingdom ; no attention to Himself in the flesh could replace this. There was the necessity of death and life, and life cheered with the blessedness of the favour of grace into which it passed, but with the urgency of a rejection to death, and therefore sentence of death passed on all that was of man, and that by His death who should have been the power of it. And the whole of man was now to give attention to His words which flowed from life and source of life which was beyond all that death could touch, and above all, and yet now in His Person guided through all. The hearing of Jesus' words was everything. What unselfish disregard of self in the accomplishment of blessing is manifested in the Lord ! The one thing needful is to hear Jesus. All these " many things " ended in death. It was care and trouble, not what led into Life Eternal, for so Jesus' words did—words issuing from a heart broken that it might let forth the stream of Eternal Life.

We have the word of Christ as the way of blessing. Mary acted according to the exhortation to the disciples : " Hear Him." In xi, 1—13, the Holy Spirit to be given, and the power of prayer. That is, we have the Word, prayer, and the Holy Ghost, our ear open to God and assurance that God's ear is open to us. Earnest importunity on one side, and sure goodness on the other ; both as to hearing and prayer earnest purpose of heart. After verse 13, it is His pleading with the Jews as to their state, ending in judgment, to the end of the chapter ; only the moral state, and the doctrine which has

influence within, settles the question of our reception of the truth. In xii, 1—12, the grounds of service for the disciples in the midst of the wickedness and opposition around them. In what follows, the same subject as regards the temporal part of it, and their waiting for Him; thus the Church's losing her true character by saying: "My Lord delayeth His coming," to verse 48. Then the then present state of things, though division and opposition would not cease with that, only that with Christ's death the straitening of the outflowing of His love would pass away. On the whole, all is a pleading in respect of His rejection, with the path of His disciples in it, and the result for Israel. In xiii, Israel and flesh in Israel is rejected for ever—is a barren fig tree. The unrepentant in Israel would be violently destroyed. He convicts them of hypocrisy, justifying the workings of His own grace, shews the nature of the coming Kingdom through His rejection. Soon the door would be shut, though He should walk to-day and to-morrow, all the due time. Then Jerusalem should do its accustomed work of rejecting Prophets, and its house, with the mourning voice of Christ the Jehovah that would have gathered her children, is left desolate. Chap. xiv carries on the same subject, the moral ground of breach with Israel, and the introduction of the new order of things by grace.

A little more detail here as to Luke. After introducing the word and prayer as the standing ground of His own then (and ever) we get the utter rejection by ascribing His power to Beelzebub, whereas God's Kingdom was come amongst them. The strong man and Stronger were there. He not with Christ was against Him. Hearing the word

of God took the place of connection of Christ with Israel after the flesh. He pronounces His judgment on them. But the light was lighted up not to be hid; the moral state, singleness of eye, however, was the way of receiving—the fruit complete light. Then the Pharisees and lawyers judged, and specially by their treatment of Prophets and Apostles who would test their willingness to receive the word. This leads to urgent pressing testimony on His disciples; they were to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. All would come out to light. They must be faithful. The next motive was, if they found hostility they were to fear not those who could kill the body and do no more, but Him who could after death cast into hell. Next, they were precious to God, their hairs counted. Next, him that confessed Christ before men He would confess before the Angels. Next, they would have the Holy Ghost, so that he that treated that with outrage would be worse than he who outraged the Son of man. But it was He who would speak in them. In what follows the Lord shews indeed the folly of having a portion in this world, and disclaims its government or ordering, but mainly expatiates on the spirit in which His disciples should walk through it. First, God would have care of them, they could not take care of themselves. The nations who do not know God seek after them; their heavenly Father knew they had need of them. They were to seek the Kingdom of God, and these would be added. Far more than that was in the Father's thoughts—they were to have the Kingdom. They were to have their treasure in heaven, and their heart would be there. Next, they were to wait for Christ with loins girded and lights burning;

in heaven they would sit down and be at ease. They were to be ready for His return, the faithful servant would be ruler over all God's goods. The mark of faithfulness would be always expecting Him, and not go on with assumption and worldliness while He was away. The Church position is shewn, and greater judgment on it than on heathen. Christ was come to send fire on the earth by that testimony, and His very presence, though in peace and grace, had kindled it. But till His death was accomplished, love, perfect in Him, was shut up as it were, could not freely flow forth to a sinful world. Though His presence kindled a fire, He must die to let out love abroad. Still from that out divisions through Him would come. Yet the Jews ought to have discerned the signs of the times, and even morally of themselves seen what was right. The aphorism of the man with his adversary going to the judge is used as to their state. They must all repent or perish by a present destruction. Israel was on its last trial, digged about and dunged, and, if it did not bear fruit, would be cut down. Such is the end of human nature!

Chapter XI.

The next thing to undividedly hearing the word of Jesus is supplication directed by Him. Further, we have the Lord Himself in the position of prayer, and the expression, I apprehend, of His dependence and desire while walking in humiliation here below, rejected as we have seen Him been. The coming of His Father's Kingdom—how full

must His heart have been of it! The place of repose and power in blessing for all, for a world that knew not blessing, and joy for them that suffered in it! How continually we find Him here the humbled One! Hearing His word, and prayer are the two great instruments of His Kingdom.

—1. We have noticed the order to end of chap. x. Then comes that by which we exercise the power of the Kingdom here, and the instruction concerning it, its objects, as to man's perseverance, and God's character, and dependence, as Father. Its Gentile character, which is full of instruction and interest, may be observed in the note following.

—2. I am afraid, without adequate research, of trusting to the rejection of the passages as here given, though their insertion for correspondence sake by ignorant persons is much more likely than their omission, if adequate careful testimony be afforded. If they be just they will afford much insight into the character of the desires of the (Gentile) Church as compared with the Jewish portion or character of the promises; for example, the omission of "Thy will be done," would be very marked. "Who art in heaven," I take to be Jewish, as contrasting His dwelling place with theirs. Thus: "Hear Thou from heaven Thy dwelling place." He "is in heaven and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few." "The heaven, and heaven of heavens" etc. "The earth hath He given to the children of men;" see 2 Chron. vi, 18. Ps. cxv, however, from which the former quotation is taken, seems most strongly to mark it. Indeed I should perhaps say that the expression "But our God is in heaven" (*veloheynu vash-*

shamayim) is taken from it. It was the point of faith with the Jews, and so expressed in that psalm in the trial of the latter day, when they were reproached by those who to all appearance had possessed themselves of the earth, having relinquished all heavenly hopes. With us really it is a matter of faith to believe there is a God of the earth; "They stand before the God of the earth," therefore He says. Not but that the prophetic Spirit went higher, as Isaiah lxv. So remark the omission of μὴ βαττολογήσητε (use not vain repetitions; Matt. vi, 7). We do not say: "Who art in the heavens," because we have been made to sit there, etc. And again: "Ye are come" etc. It is there we know God and, as we have said, it is that His power is on earth is the matter of our faith, and where it is tried on evil's account because it is as though there were no God. And it is against the ungodly heathen, infidels, apostates from the Father and the Son that Ps. lviii has its force; so in the end of Ps. ix. Perhaps too the position of "Thy" is emphatic dispensatorily. The Lord God was the Jews' Father in righteousness, the Gentile believers' in adoption of election. Till His Kingdom came they had no portion, but when we say: "Who art in the heavens," it assumes that we have a portion and place upon earth. The "Father who from heaven" (verse 13) is characteristic, not local, as we have noted of "from" (ἐξ) specially, and without the article. We may note also the subject of the gift there "Holy Spirit;" compare Matt. vii, 11, "The Father." The Father is to both in Christ, the Father of the age to come, but especially according to their respective characters. There is something more exalted in the desire of the Gentile, more special in that of the Jew in faith. "To-day"

(σήμερον) is also in my opinion Jewish, the subject of present petition. I suspect there will be great force put into the mouth of a Remnant, or believing Jew in the latter day, and deep interest in: "Forgive us our debts" etc. The petition here, though full of substance as to the soul in its moral character, and even more so, *i.e.*, more definitely, it is sins it speaks of, and so "To every one" (παντὶ) has not such specific force. Perhaps Zechariah iii may explain the "Save us" (ῥῦσαι) of Matt. vi, 13.

Also the Father and the Son come and make their abode with us, and this would seem excluded if we said distinctively "Who art in the heavens." The passage in Matthew is clearly Jewish as being in the Sermon on the Mount, exposition, and holds Jewish ground of entrance into the Kingdom, although in all its moral characteristics and hopes, its spirit, it reaches out into the Kingdom of heaven. It is a Jew of the then times entering into the Kingdom of heaven, and looking out therefore for the Father's Kingdom.

I would note the character here of the prayer proposed. It is the revelation of the Name of Father to His little flock, the men given Him out of the world. Then the revelation of the first desire of His own heart at all cost to Himself—"Hallowed be thy name." This must be the first desire of holiness, and the true position of dependence on the Father of glory. Next, the knowledge of blessing in His glory—"Thy Kingdom come." The sense of evil quickens this when the relation of Father in love is fully known and felt, as in Jesus. It comes in here justly as to time too, for the Messiah in present blessing having been rejected, He, always submissive and dependent, but full of

holiness and love, looks up for the Father's blessing. The rejection of Messiah made the Father's Kingdom the only and perfect hope of blessing. It was now no longer too the full display of temporal blessing in assured abundance, future supplies, but the meeting of a stranger's necessities—strangers now, Messiah being rejected, passing onward to another Kingdom, and made utterly strangers here, never to be settled or rested here—"Give us our needed bread for each day." It refers then to grace in the way, from the recognition of and dependence on grace: "Forgive us our sins, for we forgive those who are indebted to us; and lead us not into temptation," *i.e.*, as a chastisement or trial in the midst of a world of evil.

It was not the security of righteousness when a righteous God by His government attached necessary blessing to righteous, but the spirit of meekness to others in the sense of evil in itself, looking for mercy, and the consciousness of danger and temptation casting on our Father that He should not try us by it. It is not at all the knowledge of the Gospel, nor the demand of the Holy Ghost, but the expression of the holy desires of a Remnant who had stepped by higher thoughts, or rather into necessarily higher thoughts by the rejection of the chief of all the lower blessings by man, but beloved and Son of the Father, and thus morally brought into thoughts suited to the position, but not having received the answer of the accomplishment of another dispensation of blessing, nor knowledge of the power by which it was to be conducted. Still the great moral principles of it were laid in the desires of the Father's Name being sanctified, the consciousness of the need of mercy and that He could be applied to for it, the spirit of

love or mercy to others, and this expressed by strangers who were passing on to hopes founded on known relationship of love, but of yet unaccomplished glory and blessing —the result of the revelation of the Father's Name to disciples for whom the work was not yet actually accomplished by a rejected Messiah, which should place them on entirely new ground, but who were taught and made to taste in this its moral sweetness and dependence. It is exceedingly lovely in connection especially with its place in this Gospel.

In confirmation of the way in which, however deep the moral principles of the objects, the form of the Lord's prayer applies to these circumstances of the Apostles economically *i.e.* to the dispensation in which He then exercised His ministry, we find the prayer for the Holy Ghost added here as a distinct thing (verse 13) and not in the prayer at all. The prayer is not here as definitely Jewish as in Matthew. There it was given at the beginning of His course in instructions designating the moral principles of His Kingdom which would reveal the Father, here at the close of it on His rejection, when what was definitely earthly and Jewish is not stated, as passing for them and for a season into higher scenes. The giving of the Spirit in reply to prayer is given as a fresh instruction, an answer to the importunity of the asker, and an expression of the goodness of the Father.

I find two great principles of prayer here, the latter specially relative to the Holy Spirit. First, that whose efficacy is described as lying in importunity. This is not spoken of the Father ; in Him liberality is spoken of, and sure kindness, from the very relationship. Here it is

"Because of his shamelessness" (ἀναίδειαν). It may be a friend that seeks it, but it is rendered to the importunity. Here God acts supremely, and according to His own thoughts, in a supremacy which maintains righteousness while it brings forth glory according to His purpose, a glory in which His fulness shall be displayed, as His love indeed accomplished—but as to which, if I may so speak, He expects to and must be glorified, in which faith must be exercised acting on the holy and amazing consciousness of His power, and bearing in its bosom the reproaches of the mighty, and the dealings of God with evil. We read of Christ Himself; He "Was heard because of His piety," and at that time "Being in an agony He prayed more earnestly." I do not say this is the only case, but it is ever a meeting of the demands of the Lord in faith. It is connected with the hindrances evil puts in the way of God's blessing, and the holy and jealous God, righteously jealous of His own character, must deal with the evil in dealing with the supplication. "It became Him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Thus, if there be evil in the Church, and the introduction of the working of the wicked one and I pray for blessing, I cannot have the blessing but in bearing in spirit (for efficaciously Christ has done it, and therefore I can so pray) but bearing in spirit the evil so that, the Lord's character in grace being fully honoured, He can give the blessing and restore from the power of the evil. I do not believe there was a case the Lord wrought in which His Spirit did not undergo the sorrow of the evil, so as to draw forth the complacency of His Father in union with

whom He put forth the power of the cure. In intercession the Church and the saint has share in this work of Christ. It is not atonement but (which is true also in atonement) a full moral honour done to God. Hence too, "Labouring earnestly in prayer for you all." In a word, the spirit and heart must go through the full results of the moral character of God as exercising supremacy in holiness on the case, that the blessing may flow forth on the soul. Hence it is there are cases unto death which cannot be prayed for, because they are such that, though not exercising the judgment, the Church is forced by the evil to take part, as it were, with God against the evil, unable to separate it from the evil doer as a failure and weakness, and thus is silenced. It is not its part to judge, and cannot intercede. There is some difference between the Church and the individual, because the Church is looked at as possessing and even administering the charity of God, whereas the individual acts in individual faith, and so bears the burden. Cases of sin in the whole body may arise, which are however analogous. The difference was like the sin of the whole congregation, and an individual when the congregation was at peace. This importunity first then, and primarily, secures the vindication of the holy supremacy of God; but dependence in respect of our weakness and nothingness, and His supremacy, are taught too—subjection and humbleness. Besides, faith is exercised, and intimacy with God wrought in the soul thereby, intimacy connected with dependence. Often, as we have seen, it is connected with God's moral government of others, and Satan's claim thereby, whence the suffering in intercession noticed above; and see Daniel.

Then there is instruction in the deep need which the

thing prayed for supplies, and hence faith wrought in entire dependence as gift where there was only weakness, or even evil in the use of the answer. The great thing presented here is the exercise of faith, and the sense of necessity. We see the character of the hindrance in the case of the widow and her adversary. There is also in this intercession instruction in all the ways and counsels of God concerning His Church, and the things prayed for. Conscience in the light of the Spirit being brought near to God, the hindrances, the difficulties, the counsels of God in allowing them, His righteous judgment in it, in overcoming them in some Holy place of wisdom, are given in communion with our God, and thus intimacy of service is wrought with Him, and, though beginning in sorrow, it ends in blessing and the sense of that special honour and blessing, "God's fellow-workmen," while dependence and humbleness, the only state in which this can be, is specially maintained. But in principle faith and dependence are that which are brought into exercise, and negligence of heart is effectually corrected. The Lord also uses this to encourage in the certainty of receiving: "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one" etc. These different forms are put purposely to meet every case in which desire, need, or spiritual difficulty and energy might be called out, so that the heart might have no excuse in its negligence. Also the idea is presented of a God who gives, who opens to those without, who acts not on the previous privileges but upon existing faith and need, on the moral position of those to whom the answer is afforded. And hence it is: "Every one that asks."

Hence any Gentile, whose heart is so touched, can come in, whose heart seeks aid and supply from God. And thus the character of this part of the Gospel is fully also maintained. In this first part grace, or giving to whomsoever, is stated, but it is gift to need coming in the exercise of faith. God is accessible in affluent grace, but, as He is to be approached, the whole condition of him who approaches is brought into question, or of that in respect of which the petition is presented. Next, we have the subject of gift properly needed in the case to which they and the whole work of God was now brought, and founded in full grace on the character and relationship in which grace had now placed them, placed them not perhaps yet in the consciousness of their own position but in the revelation of the Father to them, as One too who was heavenly, and the deduction of the consequences flowing from the necessity of that character. In a word, it was not now merely God in holiness accessible to whosoever asked and sought, but a Father, in the kindness and perfection of His heavenly character, dealing in the love and consistency with such a relationship as viewed above with those who by this relationship could enter into the enjoyment of, and by it too would soon have the need of that which could realize to them, and assure the joy, and fortify, and direct them in the need according to the character of which it was the witness. It is a blessed argument from the imperfection of man to the perfection of God in man's favour.

Doubt might be cast upon the condition of the soon to be deserted disciples, upon the portion they might reckon on as by the death of Christ separated from earthly hope, and cast out with Him from all possible human dependence, on

principles which broke them off from all that could sustain in the world, and in fact left them in the position of adversaries with it, as a hostile strength, really the enemy's. In answer to this, they are cast at once on the heavenly Father, and the endowment of the Spirit as their strength—really accomplished to them, but here only abstractedly stated, that it might rest not on a fact proved but on the certain constancy of God's character. Here then we have a Father's love giving, and giving freely according to need, and according to the feeling and willingness of a Father's heart, as before God accessible in the palace of His testimonies of holiness to those who sought Him. Still here we have to remark that the case presented is not desires, the consequences of the endowment, and therefore it is not said: Your Father, as by the Spirit knowing the relationship, but the endowment itself in answer to the desire, as that on which they could reckon from the character of a heavenly Father (not merely Jehovah Elohim) for this met the then need of the disciples as separated. It was introducing them into that which met them where they were, and would be the seal of the certainty of the grace which had met them, and their strength in the position into which they were introduced. In what follows, there is the evidence of the presence of the power of the Spirit in Jesus anointed as Man, and hence speaking in the consciousness of the certainty and power of the truth He announced to others, and the controversies into which it brought, and through which it sustained by the consciousness and power of its presence. It may be remembered that in this Gospel Jesus is presented as receiving the Holy Ghost on praying.

—9. "And I say unto you." I believe I have noticed this as a form in which the Lord applies the results of a parable, when the principles of the conduct stated in it are not in accordance with the operations of the Divine mind. I am not aware that the expression is recorded by other Evangelist than Luke.

—13. "The Holy Spirit," this is the only gift of the (Gentile) Church; the rest it has only in earnest. As for earthly gifts, they are in no wise its position; care we may cast upon God, He provides the things we have need of for those seeking the Kingdom.

—14—26. We have the power in this ministry manifested, the power against which it was manifested, and the consequences to the world.

But the presence and power of the Holy Ghost had been manifested in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, and, while the disciples had yet to seek for the power of the Holy Ghost to be present with themselves, the Jewish nation were thus accomplishing their guilt in denying and blaspheming His power. And indeed the possessed man was just a type of the operation of grace in power on the Remnant of the people. Others in the midst of 10,000 miracles seek a sign. The Lord in principle morally judges the nation on these two grounds, but the point of moral condemnation is, they did not hear His word. He shews, as to the first, the discernment of the thoughts of their heart, then shows the perfect absurdity and therefore pure malice of the charge. Their own sons cast them out, and they should judge their wickedness. But, for the fact was admitted, it was by the finger of God that the devils were cast out, then the Kingdom of God was come among them.

They would give the credit to Satan rather than admit that God had visited them in goodness. They proved themselves therein the children of Satan. The real truth was then—a great conflict was manifested between Christ by the power and finger of God, and Satan. It was not merely a question of Jewish reception, it went deeper. And this conflict really existing, they must take one side or the other. He was casting out Satan, and spoiling his goods. They must side with Satan or with God. Christ was the only Centre No Jewish nation, nay, nor no Church could now hold this ground. It might be in blessing gathered, but could not be the One gathered to, though all the saved might be brought there. But Jewish centrality was gone indeed then. The Person of Christ under the law as giving it was the Centre, but now in flesh and in the manifestation of power. He was the only Centre. Whoever gathered not with Him scattered. By progressive rejection, the Lord becomes the necessary and manifested Centre of His own rights. It gradually ceased to have the character of benefits on rejecting Israel, and became the manifestation of His glory against those that rejected Him. And thus all was centred in Him; whoever was not with Him etc., for they must take the one side or the other. And whoever did not gather with Him scattered.

The Holy Ghost was the great Manifester and energy of power. Where this was not, the unclean spirit might leave a man, and the form of piety be there, but the Holy Ghost is not, and the unclean spirit returns with abundance more, and the last state is worse than the first. This is a solemn revelation of the dispensations of God's house: "Out of a man." But there is no fellow-

ship or dwelling of God there. It is thus his house. The restless spirit of evil, removed it may be in the dispensations of God by the outward effects of mercy, has, though long wandering, not lost his remembrance of his house. Providence, the dealings of God have long kept him at a distance, but though empty it has not ceased to be his house. On his return, there is nothing to impede his entrance, no power of the Lord there. It is still, however swept and ornamented, the empty house of Satan; he comes there with his friends, and it is worse than before. The interferences of providences prolonging the time and celebrating mercy, blessed to many, in that blessing dispel Satan; but many houses are left thereby untenanted—the Holy Ghost, the presence of Christ is not there. By degrees Satan, restless ever, finds occasion to return and, as we have said, there is nothing to impede his entrance, and finding this with renewed energy, conscious of the absence and desertion of the interfering power which expelled him once, he takes possession of the house where he knows there is none to disturb him; for when he was gone none other came. There was form while power acted close by, but no presence of power, and in its proved emptiness he takes possession, and the case is hopelessly worse than before. Before, Satan was there in a deceived heart, whence he had not been expelled even by the sense of power near and its effect on the heart; now, that effect is shewn to be no presence of Divine power there, and he takes possession on the evidence of it.

This is a dispensation of Divine government much to study. There is much force rested here on "my house whence I came out"—the marauding power of Satan so

distinctly pointed out, and there being no security against it but the presence of the Spirit of God, the house being filled. It was a very solemn judgment, or here rather relation, of which the application is left. This is supreme Providence and government permitting evil as the punishment of evil, leaving, the most solemn of judgments, evil to itself. The Lord actually judges them on plain simple ground, cognizable by conscience.

—15. I may remark here we have everything peculiar to the Jews left out, as in Matt. "So shall it be to this wicked generation," and here τινὲς (some). It is given not for the facts, but for the general principles, for all God's facts are general principles.

—29. Then that in which the essence of its power and responsibility consists, not any human feelings or associations with the Lord, not signs nor miracles but the hearing, testimony, and power of the word, the preaching and wisdom of the Son of man. The point of this passage is to shew the responsibility on the preaching of Christ. Jonas was a sign, as here instanced, not as in the whale's belly but as preaching without miracle to the Ninevites who, though unlettered heathens, repented. So the heathen Queen of Sheba was so desirous of wisdom she came, with no miracle or sign for witness, to Solomon for what she should hear, and a greater than Solomon was there. The first point is, who are blessed, and then the responsibility, and the reason of its rejection and darkness. It is an important passage; we may compare Hebrews iv, and 1 Cor. xiv.

Having spoken of the Holy Ghost and the necessity of His presence and power, otherwise entire liability to the

power of Satan, of those merely under the effect of some externally expulsive power, the Lord turns to contrast —for all this is the introduction of new thoughts and a new dispensation—all natural affection to Him, all that could associate with Him after the flesh, and which in fact identified Him with Judaism in the flesh, with the reception and keeping of the word. It was in contrast of course therefore with any effect on the mere natural feelings, though true as such. In a word, the reception of the word is now brought forward as now the source and characteristic of true blessing. Natural associations with Messiah were doubtless blessing, but the Divine word and its reception were clearly on a higher and far more exalted and full ground. He disowns that now, for the other was now coming in. Messiah would have been the Crown of natural blessing, had there been any good in nature, but there was none, and the Divine word was the source or instrument of a life and blessing which carried beyond nature to God by the communicating the Divine nature. The word of God heard and kept is the apparent form of this to the conscience ; they really are the form and character of Divine life and power. We have thus the Holy Ghost, present power of the Kingdom of God, and the word brought in contrast with the iniquity of the nation and its fairest natural associations, the birth of Messiah, and also with the worst iniquity of Satan in the human mind and its fairest and most touching affections. All must be new, for the old is all condemned as evil or profitless, and was now ready to vanish away. How apt in spirit to return to it! And how is the Church fallen by doing so!

—32. The testimony then of the truth seems the great practical power of the ministry. Activity, simplicity of object in this scene characteristic of its intended and reception power. They are made for a witness, and this as it enters so to be given out, that it may be the witness of what is received.

It is clear that this by introducing a moral principle (and that in contrast with the natural associations and birth of Messiah) introduced on moral ground the Gentile. The Lord turned to realities with God from a rebellious and proud rejecting form. But He proceeds to pronounce the judgment actually on the generation publicly. He uses no longer any restraints nor precautions with the nation now fully manifested. "This generation is evil; it seeketh a sign." And while the previous word is introduced by the Spirit to show the transfer to moral blessing in the judgment of the old, the Lord returns to the word of temptation presented of general unbelief, as He had replied to the blasphemy of apostate and diabolical rejection; here to unbelief, and this He addresses to the multitude generally as before "to them" (αὐτοῖς) for those who are saved must be separated from the generation. Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, and Messiah the Lord was to be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, and thus to the Jews Jonas was a sign. But here the Lord speaks of Jonas as a sign to the Ninevites, a sign of merciful testimony, and so was He to the entire nation—a sign of approaching judgment to that generation, if they did not repent, and thus were the Jews condemned in comparison with them, for they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and a greater than

Jonas was there. The presence of Jesus in testimony was the sign given to the Jewish nation, as Jonas to the Ninevites, for this presence was mercy. Thus the Queen of the South would rise up in judgment with this generation and condemn it, still contrasting realities with the guilt of formal privileges. She came to hear Solomon and a greater was there. It is evidently the word and its power by His Person is in question, not the miracle of Jonas. The men of Nineveh should do so, they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and a greater was there. It was also a national repentance, though the refusal was positive guilt. In either case the Lord shows a moral effect among Gentiles. The Lord then proceeds to discuss its presentation as light not privilege, the principle of its rejection, and the source and character of its rejection, and the judgment connected with it, and that in bold denunciation of it to the proudest of the self-righteous amongst them. The whole principle of God's dealing as to His mission, for that was now just what was in discussion, viewed in His rejection, but applicable to all their conduct.

Christ our Lord had come in the character of Light. It was not to be hid, nor was it in them. The rejection was the consequence, because of their darkness. It was not merely for enjoyment, for royalty, but for light. The Lord had come, this would disturb the haunts of darkness, but being come as Light, He had come to make manifest, and to manifest. "No one having lighted a candle puts it under a bushel, or in secret, but on a candlestick, that all who enter in may see the light." This was the Lord's place at present, to make things morally manifest by Himself, the Light.

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But there was another point connected with this—the motives. This Light, when really received, became the motives of conduct and way. The truth presented tried the motives; if objects other than following God were in the mind, it became an instant stumbling block. The light of the body was the eye; there might be plenty of light in the world, but the light of the body was the eye. If there was simplicity of intention, if the heart was simply directed to God Himself thus manifested, the whole body was light. It was not each part having light for itself. This it was was the light of the whole. But if what our mind was directed to, the object in our eye, was not simple and consequently necessarily evil, the whole body was full of darkness; all went wrong. This governed and characterised all, was the moral character of the whole, whatever its form or appearance might be, were it truth and purity itself. Motives, *i.e.* God Himself thus revealed, formed the whole principle of understanding, judgment and light. It is a completely new broad moral principle of all possible importance—no question of Jewish ordinances and privileges, but of light come in, and singleness of purpose which received the light because (through grace) Light was its object—light not abstractedly previously, but light by grace loved when light came. For here is a mistake. Little light may be received candidly, but often candour and readiness to receive the truth is boasted of previous to any light being there. This supposes light *in se* in the man, and good, and is only the pride of the supremacy of mind. It is willing subjection to light produced by the Lord which is here spoken of, not abstract goodness and sincerity which would

not, in fact, need light. There is an object, a candle lighted, something shining and receiving, *i.e.*, singleness, and sincerity of heart, for God's truth and authority are in it. There may be other objects, other light, and so the light in me be darkness, false instruction, passions and affections determined on an object which distracts and ends in self and Satan, but there is no abstract singleness of eye without an object, for where is the simplicity where there is nothing at all? This however it is, or evil. But we have to take heed not merely that our passions or personal objects do not hinder the light, for these are not called light, but that the very instruction, religious system be not formed for the sanctioning of these evil objects by Satan. The eye is then evil, but it is evil, having the authority of light by the system we are in, supposed light. But if indeed the eye be single, then the whole body is full of light, and if the whole body be full of light—blessed consequence! no part is dark. This may seem tautology to man, but the Lord knew the value of His words. When the Spirit stamps them to us, no darkness shall be there, it is a complete deliverance—the whole shall be light, positive light. It may seem tautology to say: Heaven is heavenly. But to those to whom what is heavenly is known, it conveys everything. Those who know the light, and God is in the light, will know what it is to say: It shall be all light, actively, actually light, and everything enlightened as when the bright shining of a candle gives light.

—33. Note, this marks the continuance of the testimony, though He was rejected, and what was needed to be a true testimony.

—35. This is a warning taken from the Jew's case.

We must remark it is "The light that is in thee." It is not anything presented, but the condition of the mind, and hence, whatever the instrument of obscurity, it is therein the motives of the heart which govern. A false religion, for example even, puts the soul in the light, but it leaves in the darkness of our own malicious or covetous motives. This was the case with the Jews, and the false religion does but harden in this as nominally the light. Judaism, as taken up by the corrupt motives of men, could make them ready to kill the Saviour, and forms replaced righteousness and opinions and authority renewal before God. In these cases the direction of religion rests in a caste that it may not rest in the conscience and the Lord, and so the single eye is set aside. The Divine ordering of all things gave the occasion of the application of these principles, and the Lord was now plain in His judgment of the individuals—for it was judgment, and it was mercy to be plain as to them for others.

The reception of testimony is the light of the soul. If it enters in the pure power in which it leaves God, it shall give perfectness of principle which shall give light upon all the ways of conduct and spirit. But if the reception be mixed in its motive or oblique in its spirit it, the very testimony, will be a minister of darkness; see the case of Simon Magus, and the statement of Paul in 2 Cor. iv, inclusive, and 1 Thess. ii. It is not then truth, for everything will taste of the vessel it is in. If by grace it enters and is itself, it is itself there, and the whole body is light; if by human will, or the outward manifestation of power it is recognized as true as a general act in the world—human will is human will still, and as dark as ever. When it does

thus enlighten every part of the judgment, it is not merely that it is right, but there is a bright light of truth shines, and effulgent in and with and on every step, and the whole soul itself is enlightened with the light shed on every part of its ways, and the circumstances it is placed in. The power of testimony making the singleness of Object (by the revelation of Christ as all and in all) is the light, and renewal of heart unto God, for the truth is the moral reflection of the glory of God in truth and in character, and received in its truth, and so as occupying and constituting renewingly in power the mind, is conversion and renewing into His image in righteousness and true holiness, and the whole soul is formed into the reflection of the truth, and therefore answers, as an image, to God.

—37, *et seq.* How little turns a man of ceremonies, whose soul is not opened, from the objects about which it was curious or concerned in the things of God! And how does the Master mind of truth, formed on and occupied with it, find even in the circumstances which occupy the mind of one engaged with them, the occasion of drawing out the full principles of truth and Divine righteousness!

The dissection of false principles is needful where the form of religion so easily assumes a garb of sanctity, hateful indeed in character but imposing on many whom ignorance which it sustains or rather cultivates by the imposition of this cloak, and moral error in the root of things, subject to its influence. The Lord detects an utterly unclean inside with much pretence and pride withal. Purity within gives humility, for it is connected with conscience, and the holy and cheerful sense of God's presence, and being in us and with us, which indeed is the

root and stay of purity of mind. It is recklessness of spirit within which gives pride which, for its own objects, may put on any form without, but therein also easily detects and shews itself to the eye experienced in moral good and evil, and single-eyed so as to be full of light, for this is our wisdom. For what is impure easily shews on what is pure, however dressed or concealed. So in our hearts, and this is the wisdom of the simple, and is perfect. No judge of character, not himself purified, can know another as the simple purified man, if the acts or expressions of another be once before him. "That which doth make manifest is light," but Christ is here the full detecting Light. But we cannot know them but so far as we are brought into His image, for that is light in us, and as far as we have it we are judges.

From this verse (37) and on, we have the sure and unmitigated judgment of the Lord on the various forms which the lifeless religion of the conductors of the people took, expressed in many ways, but constant and unmingled judgment, and thereon the necessary sacrifice of all in a condemned World, and the largeness, voluntariness, and activity of grace on the part of God the Saviour. The world withal is condemned as to its principles, as the Jews for their state. The first ground of condemnation is the substitution of forms, and outward cleansings, and services which the flesh can render, for cleanness of heart and the Spirit of love. If that be there, all external things are clean. Money continually occupies the heart when there is only a form of religion, for it represents the world. Respect and pre-eminence is another form of this, though white without they were all unclean within. Next,

the Lawyers are condemned, and with this character, imposing religion strictly on others, and saving the conscience thus from the trouble of observing it. The Lord is fearless now, as we have observed, in unmitigated judgment.

—39. This is not merely personal hypocrisy in a true system, but hypocrisy of system. The principles are the same, but here it is contrasted, as systematized, with the principles of the Divine Kingdom which reflects in principle the image and character of God—not merely evil, but the principle of evil in the form of falsehood systematically imposing itself on the fears and thoughts of men. But it is folly as well as deceit, deceived as well as deceiving, for a man cannot deceive without being deceived, and, not having communion with God, must (to have power over man) put that which is without instead of that which is within. Strictness in minute matters of ceremony, failure in principle in obvious cases of rectitude and mercy (for the senses become stupefied) this detects it. These are the broad general principles, and therewith the evidence of an unchanged heart—covetousness. Its formal character and judgment follows.

—43. The Lord gives their character while He detects their principles. An unsuspecting mind goes on often not seeing the character of certain acts, but stating the act according to its truth exhibits the motive which the truth of, *i.e.* of the facts exhibiting it, is well known. Hypocrisy of outward religion, and the pride of place in religion, ever go together; for indeed there is no other reason for the hypocrisy save folly.

—46. We have another mark of false religion. Being turned into a law it is imposed, according to the will of

those who take advantage of it, on its unsuspecting votaries, and thus their character and authority kept up, while they subject themselves to no such ways. It is one of the marks of the wilfulness and hopelessness of the evil, to whom God says: "Woe."

—47. Another mark is attaching sanctity to themselves by much honour paid to those who have suffered for the truth—saints and martyrs of old—while indeed they have the principles of and are descendants in character and truth of those who killed them. A notable mark! Yea, in this very honour their principles are developed.

It might not appear at first why building the sepulchres showed approbation of those who killed them, but they took up their place, as it were. They sought in it their own honour instead of receiving the testimony of the Prophets which would have humbled them in the very dust, for the moral and utter ruin of the nation, instead of adorning, as if it was all well, the tombs of all that was good in it. Holy fear at the Prophets' rebuke would never have adorned the Prophets' sepulchres. It was the spirit of this world. The assurance of continuance, or at least perseverance in present things, notwithstanding sin which the Prophets had denounced, the form of piety to the dead, for credit to themselves which rejected the testimony of the living—it was all self-approbation in evil, and so reckoning on continuance. They really carried on the works of their fathers. But a plainer and clearer evidence of this would be given in the wisdom of God. Prophets and Apostles (messengers) would be sent to them, and it would be proved what spirit they were of. As to the testimony of God, they would kill and crucify. Note,

the doctors of the law, the expositors of the law, took the lead, or specially were in the principle of this; as nearer to the law in pride they rejected the testimony sent. The Pharisees were hypocrites, and so judged, but these perverted their nearness to the word in their carnal hatred to any real testimony to their own conscience. As they honoured the testimony that they might have the honour of it when once it was not found on their conscience, building its repentance and perfecting the work of those who rejected it, so, when occasion was offered, they would show the identity of their principle. Having the credit of the law and knowledge, they could least of all bear a testimony to themselves as evil. Hence, in pride and fear, they take to themselves all the springs of knowledge. They do not enter in, for they must do that as learners needy and ruined, and give up their character as doctors to be poor sinners as the rest, and consequently those that are entering in they hinder. And they would condemn themselves, and, besides all, their character and honour go for nothing. This is a great dishonour to God as sending knowledge in grace, having judged the forms of piety and knowledge. Where personal responsibility and conscience was not, their resource, as ever, was to press Him with all manner of questions, not seeking, and incapable of, truth, and convicted of evil themselves, if at least they could make void and neutralize the truth and goodness of God in convicting Him of error. This we must ever attend to.

—50. This judicial word of our Lord's is worthy of all attention. This was the counsel of God's plan, thus solemnly pronounced by the Lord, that, as they thus inherited the spirit and sonship of their fathers, they should,

as the end and climax of their schemes and rebellion, fill up and bring to its head the spirit and fulness of their wickedness, that all might be sought at their hands. Such is the method of God! Detected hypocrisy rages against the Author of its detection, and having lost its value, as hypocrisy or breaking through in its real hatred of the truth, that thorough debasement of heart and principle which is involved in the deliberate use of what is good for our own ends, breaks through when its selfishness seems in danger. And then comes judgment by its iniquity against those who loved the truth, because they were a light which shewed their darkness. This pretence of good then is the worst moral state possible, for the open wickedness which follows is, as it were, preparation for judgment. Thus God says: I will accomplish their wickedness—I will send them what is good that they may shew their enmity against it. God goes on warning while wickedness is increasing, then leaves it to itself and it grows confident, and well-pleased with itself, because it is separated from God, and has set up for itself, as it were; then delighting itself in very wickedness in hypocrisy, for God's leaving it gives opportunity for this. It was an accomplishment of the spirit of wickedness, with the sin of the others before them. The Lord closing the system sends to find the fruits of warning and patience —fruit suited to their pretence of their exclusive character of "The people"—for when men have lost the sense and value of moral truth, they set up for being something special, as *e.g.* the Church. Then, the instant God appears, their state and enmity to Him is discovered, and shews itself in the darkest colours. Everything on which they had prided and distinguished themselves, being void of truth,

when the truth came, was detected, and their madness shewing itself in deliberate enmity, what was shewn only in fruits before, now shews itself as the form and substance and essence of their system, and they are justly punished as for all. For the tree which bore it, and whose suckers were shooting up then, has now grown out into manifestation and corporate identity to be acted on.

—52. The next point of hypocritical systematic religion is the depriving, under the pretence of expounding and being the persons to apply to others the truth and force of the Law, those who were the objects of it of the direct application of the convincing knowledge-giving word to their hearts and consciences, taking away the key of knowledge so that they could not go in for themselves without their leave and opening the door; and in result not going in themselves, and only using their title to instruct as a right to hinder their entering into the knowledge of what God has set before men in this word by which He reveals His grace, and makes men responsible.

—53, 54. Such is ever the conduct of the hypocritical professors of false religion. Having nothing of moral truth to bring forward nor to answer to the evidence of deceit and fraud, which their acts when stated exhibit, their endeavour is to puzzle and perplex those who state it, that, by the want of clearness and evidence in their charge, or by committing themselves by being unable to answer some irrelevant, or unguardedly answering some captious and cunning, question they may lay hold on what they say, so as to accuse them as bearing against admitted principles, and so throw the charge and burden and

conviction off their own consciences where the truth and light of truth had fixed it. Here, the Spirit in conclusion has shewn their act itself in its true light as part of their system.

Chapter XII.

This chapter, partially noted, is very full. It is all founded on the continuance of testimony, the setting up of light consequent on and connected with His rejection. First, Satanic deceit and murder contrasted with the light according to which they were to walk, present light and judgment. This is the first principle. Then goodness or love, and confidence in it. Next confession or denial of Son of man; then, blaspheming or speaking by the Holy Ghost. This closes that contrast. Then Christ, not setting the world right, but dealing with the individual's heart and soul for another world. This is bringing another world's light in. Next, love as regards the disciples, and their path as to worldly things. They were to get out of the snare the world was in, in this respect. Then (v. 35, 36) His coming for saints waiting for Him, (v. 42, 43) for servants serving Him—blessing and rule; but the giving out of this light would make Christendom more responsible than the heathen. This closes verse 48. But His full rejection which was to bring all this was really through the light which shone in Him producing its certain fruits. Yet His work of love was, as it were, shut up till His death for all that. The state is the worst

imaginable, Micah vii. But the unconverted should have discovered the times, and natural conscience would have decided between Him and His adversaries. But He was in the way with them, and if they did not bow and agree they would go to prison. The general resulting judgment of Jerusalem goes on to the end of chap. xiii.

Observe how very strongly responsibility and Divine care and power are brought out in the beginning of this chapter. First, 2—7, all to be in the light and fear of Him who can cast into hell after death, but the very hairs of their head numbered—they were not to fear, they were of value to God. They were to confess Christ, own Him publicly and actively, or they would be denied. But then he who blasphemed their service was worse than those who spoke against the Son of man. And if persecuted and brought before magistrates, the Holy Ghost would speak in them. They were not to be anxious and prepare what they had to say, *i.e.*, integrity and truth in them before God—providential care—confession of Christ, and the power of the Holy Ghost to carry them through it.

Next, the Lord refuses government in righteousness which hereafter He will have (as He had then the right) but turns to the state of the heart as regards the world, and the path of faith as regards His disciples. Their heavenly Father knew they needed food and raiment. What they were to seek was the Kingdom, and that He would give them. The mixture of responsibility and assured grace still continues. Next, they were to have done with earthly treasure and wait for Christ, their loins girded and their lights burning. In this part the Lord

though addressing the Jewish Remnant, and speaking of His return as Son of man, yet makes their portion with Himself. It is the known disciples separated to Himself while on earth, and though of universal application, and figuratively placing them in heaven, yet looks at them as the Remnant on earth. It is not a revelation of the rapture—that is special. What follows goes definitely forth to all, and the professing Church is looked at as in the world, whether faithful or unfaithful. It is Christ's servant and minister in the world which is spoken of. Still even 41—48 refers to earth; government of all things, or judgment of the professing Church, and all on earth. The former part though referring to servants gives the higher blessing; 49—53 gives the effect of His coming on earth, shewing His own suffering as needed to let out into liberty the love with which He was animated; 54—59, puts definitely the case of Israel as in the way with Jehovah to judgment, how they ought to have discerned that time, and even without signs have discerned what was right. In chap. xiii, we have the positive warnings, the judgment going on, grace instead of law with hypocrisy, the character of the Kingdom with the need of earnestness—for otherwise they would be outside, and strangers owned their place—mere rejoicing in present blessings would not do. Jerusalem must be the grave of witness, but Christ would continue His service, which nothing could hinder, till His time was come. Chap. xiv. pursues the same subject, only with larger moral development. The rising of grace over the law and covenant proving the hypocrisy of those who held to the latter, is repeated, and these principles are developed, founded on the circumstances which were before the Lord's

eyes. Self-abasement contrasted with self-exaltation, grace-conduct contrasted with the spirit of the world, to be blessed at the resurrection of the just. Then the parabolic illustration of what was taking place (in grace, though grace rejected by Israel) in Israel and the world. The witness that men, if they would follow Christ, must take up the cross wholly, the cost of following Christ was to be counted. If the salt lost its savour, it was good for nothing. What follows (xv, xvi) brings out the whole system of grace, and the revelation of another world or rather heaven, forming the judgment of things in this, and so clearing all. What preceded was dispensationally and morally preparatory; here the principles of the new system itself are fully brought out.

The Lord pursues His testimony to the strong and explicit bringing of all things into the light, and the breaking down of all formality, of all that could be presented to man, and the certain bringing of all things into the light. But as this breaking down of all formalism and bringing of all things now into the light of glory, had its operation and present effect by the death of Messiah, the Lord Jesus, the power of Satan not being yet set aside, the most complete rejection, even to death, was the result, very probably, of bringing in the light, during the period of Satan's power, into a dark world. The Lord had led the way in this Himself, teaching us not only by Divine knowledge, but by sympathy and experience of what was here. We have to refer to Him who searcheth the hearts and judges the soul as the body in the day when the secrets of men's hearts shall be revealed, and to seek a purity suited to that day. But the introduction by grace of light which condemns

the impurity and evil of the world, produces the enmity and malice of the world; verse 4 here shews it, and the Lord is now plainly exposing as suffering these things. "I have given them" (therefore it is written) "Thy word, and the world hath hated them." O Lord make us faithful, for in truth we are very weak, and in Thy grace bring in the light, walking in the light! These are the principles stated of the Lord. First, God's necessary determination to bring everything to light. This applied to all that was secret among the disciples. It would all be brought out, and that humanly even; which note well. But then as to the danger of walking in the light, they were not to fear those who could kill the body, but God who could kill the soul—yea, they were to fear Him. Jesus perfectly feared God, and was of quick understanding in it, and suffered the death of those who could kill the body. Further, even here not a hair of their head but was counted by Him who cared for the sparrows, and they, precious word! were of much more value. For our God has made it of faith to believe that He cares much for us, very much. This is great grace.

But, further, besides the providence of perfect Divine goodness and care for His own now, there was the result in relation with the Son of man thus humbled in God's behalf. For whosoever confessed Him before men should be confessed before the Angels of God. There would be a return and answer of glory before the Angels of God, for shame before men, and he who denied Him before men would be denied by Him before the Angels of God, for Christ had taken His shame here below, but all before God would melt, and therefore own Him. He was content with shame, though He felt it far more deeply than any, because

His sensibilities and His love were perfect. No entrance of evil or sin had ever hardened His heart; but that God might be fully glorified here, and for the glory that was His there in the presence of God, He bore all. He came to suffer. He had hidden His glory to effect grace. He had come amongst evil and sin, expecting to find it, and to give a subject to Divine glory in His humiliation. This was the patience of God. But He was to be glorified, and as He came to do and to bear in a sort of concealment in love, claiming nothing, so the Holy Ghost would come in the title and asserting the glory of God, and in the glory of God, and claiming subjection to this glory, and bearing witness to the grace demonstrating the glory in power. A word spoken against Him would not be forgiven. But here in grace this is attached to the disciples to console and comfort them in their weakness. He might be slighted, but if He by whom they would speak was slighted, it would be unpardonable. Such were the principles, the warnings, the motives, and the encouragements attached to a mission founded on death, and perhaps conducting to it, but which was the bringing in of light by grace into a world of darkness. Accordingly, in verse 11, the Lord applies the presence of the Spirit to their circumstances of trial. If the Spirit was spoken against, it was unpardonable, but when they were brought by the hostility of the world before magistrates and rulers, the Holy Ghost would aid them, or rather speak by them.

The Lord thereon proceeds to adjudge the position of the world. Jewish blessing had lost its place, the true light now shining. He declines accordingly to judge any judgment now, and only warns against the folly of the love of

the things which gave occasion to this judgment. The soul in its position before God was what was now in question. Further, as regards the disciples, this took away the occasion of carefulness. The life (which was now understood) was much more than this, and the body than raiment. It had to say to the Lord—His life and glory. The Lord having stated this principle enforces it by this, that they could not effect anything, and that the Lord's care did, even for the ravens and lilies. Further, all the heathen of this world sought these things, they were the desires of the natural heart, and their heavenly Father, in whose Name they stood, knew they had need of these things, and actually, if they sought the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, these things will be added. The whole ground of the disciples' position in the world, consequent on the rejection of Christ, is thus set. This is carried on to the Kingdom, first viewed in a purely heavenly character (v. 33) and then waiting for the Lord (34 *et seq.*). Their position, we have seen, was one of trial of faith, of opposition by the world, and the power of Satan. But the little flock were not to fear. He whose light and Name brought them into trial, the Father of the rejected Jesus, would give them the Kingdom. Verse 32 comes at the same time as a sweet and blessed answer to 31. The principle of comfort indeed—but devotedness is called for, urging them to seek the Kingdom of God, to give themselves up to Him, seek His Kingdom not themselves, and with the promise that the needed temporal things would be given them. But the Lord's heart breaks out here over them, in the manifestation of the fulness of grace. It was not merely providential care while they were labouring.

The Kingdom itself was theirs. It was the Father's good pleasure to give them the Kingdom. His thoughts and delight were much more than to supply need. It was just this Kingdom.

From verse 1 to end of 13, we have the Spirit, principle, and actual direction in which they were to carry on the ministry of the truth in the midst of the hypocrisy, trial and violence He had just been alluding to, and of which, as far as related to conscience, He had just been detailing the principle. Here He directs and warns them as to the results, as actually in the world. It is addressed to His disciples, but it was no fearful compromise by which He inculcated His principles. But, while He addressed it to those whom it was expedient and concerned to know it, He did it in the presence of an immense multitude, as one willing to act on that of which He spake, that what He spoke in the ear should be proclaimed on the housetops. There is a great lesson in the manner of this.

—1. Coming from God they had no need to be concealed, nor did it suit their mission (compare our Lord's answer to the High Priest) compare also Rom. i, 16, and 2 Cor. iv. Your doctrine is the light, act suitably, beware of any want of openness, as if it were a selfish system you were following, or any want of sincerity as though cunning could gain your end. Besides, it is useless, for all shall come out. I did not send it not to come to light, and to light it shall come. This is universally true by the judicial bringing forth of all things by God; I say: All things. But in fact it shall be true. I tell you judicially, in your ministry, God will exercise the spirit of judgment on your ministry, and all that you are and have said shall be brought to light, for I

have set you in the world as detecting, as light. Satan knows it, and will bring all out to light he can, if there be anything inconsistent with light, and in this he will act by right of the purpose which I have appointed you to, for I have set it to be made known, and your official character will be acted upon. However, our Lord states the broad principle of the system, warning them accordingly to beware of the spirit of hypocrisy in anything, for Light was the name and characteristic of His ministry in the midst of evil.

—4. This however would necessarily bring them into conflict with a world that hated the light, and felt one that brought it an enemy for detecting it, and shewing it to itself. The Lord meets this fear therefore with encouragement very graciously, "To you, my friends," with very strong and important truth, to set it straight in point of wisdom and duty. They can kill the body, assuming this, for humanly speaking they can, for that is the place of adversity and the devil's power (as to this) but no more. Fear therefore rather Him who has power over body and soul to cast into hell, yea, "Fear Him." But farther, not a sparrow could fall to the ground without their Father (or as here more generically and not specifically) without God. But such was His care over them, the very hairs of their head were numbered. "Fear not therefore"—adding (8, 9) as principle, warning, and promise, as immediately connected with the actual confession of Himself in the world, as the moral point of faithfulness, the consequences of that confession or the contrary.

—6, 7. These verses give the counter motive in the way of encouragement; verse 8, countermotive as to the result; verse 10, from the presence of the Holy Ghost.

Note, you have "God" (their "Father," Matt. x. 29) Himself as Son of Man (Matt. x. 33, as Son) and the Holy Ghost, not in Matthew in this place but in another connection as mere encouragement, 19, 20; that of the whole chapter, compare Matt. xii. 31.

—12. But there was another principle and Agent to be introduced, connected with this subject—the Holy Spirit sent by the Son and, in office, the Witness of the Son. Denying the Son implied knowing Him, not really knowing what a person was about, but that which was wilful. Speaking evil of Him in ignorance, it was ignorant in unbelief, God took no account of, would not charge it. It was indeed sin, but would be forgiven, looked at in mercy rather as matter of compassion through love. But one blaspheming against the Holy Ghost, who was Light and Witness of His glory, was opposing light and witness, and would not be forgiven. It was opposing the very Witness of His glory. That that was spoken against Him in ignorance of and denying His glory, was forgiven, and forgave itself, *i.e.*, it denied and did not refuse witness of, and therefore showed itself ignorance. It was an act done while ignorant, and not against the witness of the Spirit, for that is the point. It is not the ignorance arising from shutting one's eyes, and opposing the light of the Spirit, but ignorance as contrasted with that as such. Such was the danger and warning; on the other hand, the blessing contained within this principle of the presence of the Spirit, that it would teach them in their emergencies of mind, in fulfilment of the duty imposed, confessing Him (as they were not to fear as to their body) what they were to say and what they were to speak when, and at the time they

needed, so that all was provided for for them. Observe now the order which is very perfect and very practical. The great subject is the witness and confession of Christ, of that which they have within.

It runs thus: Beware of hypocrisy—for the great general principle God acts upon bringing everything to light—then meeting the fear generated by this: You had much better fear God—the principle having been stated. Besides God will, in point of fact, take care of you—then, having stated what was to be avoided, and discussed the wisdom of the principle, and its supports against fear, the service in which it was to be exercised, with its actual and just or retributive results, the confessing Him before men. But the peculiar manner in which this was to be done, and its special responsibility, and what was to be their special support as to their competency, is then stated. Were we to indulge ourselves, we might see that this instruction flowed from a deeper source, and was a development of the offices of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit in the work of redemption, or rather bringing into restoration the principles of light out of evil in the manifestation of the Son by the Spirit, as a tangible instrument by which it was developed, and man's part in it, and how brought out to light, good or evil, with the perfect and certain plan of the invisible God in and through it all, and in this is extremely interesting; compare, which runs deeply to the abstract principles of this through the manifestation, 1 John i.

13. Here the special malicious action of Satan is closed, and his general influence as the spirit of the world is entered on; see verses 2 and 4. Now men to verse 21, then disciples to verse 48; all founded on breach with

Israel, founded on xi. 15. Verse 49 takes up the question of Israel again (comp. 58, 59 and beginning of xiii.) and refers to His death.

From verse 13 to xiii, 9, seems to me to be substantially one discourse or section. It embraces indeed a great many associated subjects dependent on it, but it all hangs on the character in which Christ now entered His ministry, and the footing on which He placed, or on which the Kingdom was placed, as expressed in verse 14 in reply to the question in verse 13. It may be divided at these points, 31, 49, 59, and xiii, 9. It was an important point, after the consideration of the place in which the believing witness was placed, to have the ground generally declared of what character generally, as to the Kingdom, our Lord appeared. This was supplied by the question of some one who wished our Lord to take this place, the place of regulating distributive justice, and producing righteousness on earth. Such He disclaimed in fact then, and proceeds thereupon to shew the principles of the Kingdom, the inward principles, as then manifested, in which it was contrasted with the world, its present object which would not be answered by the introduction of general righteousness outwardly in the world, which neither was practicable according to the dispensations of God ; for that which was manifested during the interval of our Lord's presence was of equal importance, though not of the same rest or glory as that in which He should take the glory of the power. It was the Enos state of the Church, in which its faithfulness, grace, and separation from the world were manifested, as in Him, save as perfect in Himself at His first coming. In this it was a witness of that through the power received at His resurrection, as He in

His own faithfulness, and by the presence of the Father as understood in faith by Him through the Spirit dwelling in Him without measure. So the Church, save that it is sanctified in Him as in the glory, save that it is still His. In this accordingly our Lord in His gracious condescension instructs us. The first is the broad general principle that our life is not in them; see note on verse 15. It is this question of God with the soul (for there God has His question now) on which it all hangs. Life (ζωὴ) does not consist. "I will say to my soul" (ψυχὴ); he thought his soul was in this, but he was a fool (ἄφρων). "This night thy soul shall be required of thee; and whose shall be what thou hast prepared?" Leave every thing a man must. The only question is between grace for Christ and necessity for nothing. On the whole this is the case and condition of a man, "Who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God;" here characteristic, without article—"rich" (πλουτῶν).

—15. He says as a principle of life to the multitude: "Keep yourselves from all covetousness," for your life is not in this. But He draws from the consideration of this subject this guide to His disciples: "Be not anxious about what is necessary," adding many considerations why they should not, for God recognizes the necessity of food and clothing, and will therefore provide for them that trust in Him, so as that they need not be anxious. But He warns all to keep from covetousness as an evil in itself. It is common with our Lord in His discourses to address Himself to the multitude on the principles of good and evil, life and death, and to His disciples on principles on the same subjects flowing from their state of grace and faith.

—22. This begins another branch of this part of the subject: "To His disciples." If these be the general principles, if it be thus with the world, do you who have a Father, even the Father, not be anxious or take thought for your soul or body, "What ye shall eat . . . . nor what ye shall put on." I had customarily thought that this contained merely an *a fortiori* argument, that if God had given the greater He would surely give the less. But there is more—to you, believers, the soul or life must be more than merely meat. It is not that which it will occasion to you the care of; and the body worth more than raiment, as if that were the only thing it should give occasion to you for thought about, when indeed it was to put on and be the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. This however was not yet revealed. It was however more than clothing, there was something more in it than that, and Christ spoke from, though He did not declare that knowledge, and so justly, for His subject, as it was comparative teaching, He was occupied with, and not express revelation of promise. Well then! if they be so, your thoughts should be in another channel, rising above such a view of the soul and body. Yet there is more in this. This is the natural care of it, for the natural man cannot go beyond it; "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Do not therefore take thought for the body or life, for taking thought for them, as in the world, is always natural and of the natural man. The Life concerned service for God—Eternal Life, all He had to give that was Life. But He proceeds to assign positive grounds operative upon them as believers in this world, to wit, instead of making these things the end of their thoughts as to soul and body, and

their god as unbelievers must—to know God, and therein that these were subsidiary things which He provided when He was owned as God, for these things were His and under His ordering, and that He cared for them, and for much less even than they.

—24. As to food, "Consider the ravens" etc., and God nourisheth them, and ye are better than birds. Neither can ye do the least thing in providing for yourselves as to this body of yours.

—28. I observe it is "God," not "Your Father," as the characteristic style here. This is an additional argument. The first was as believers, the soul and body have quite different objects and privileges, but even as to these exercise faith in God. As to food, "Consider the ravens"—for God's actual providing care and your own weakness. As to clothing, "Consider the lilies." "If . . . . the grass" etc. And generally (verse 29) "seek not what ye shall eat or drink," nor be making consultations in your mind. This may (in an evil sense) become those that do not know God, but your Father knows you want these things. What is not your life ye are foolish to seek, and to you, believers, your soul and body is worth a great deal more than these things. These things, which your life and body do need, your Father knows it does, and indeed provides that which is of much less value. Such are the principles on which believers are to act, as associated with the world.

—32. But the Lord stretches up, as it were, upon higher ground. Believers there is a special object about; you take higher ground. "Fear not, little flock, it has been the Father's" mind and "good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The Kingdom! Sit loose to, get rid of the

things that you have, and rest in, and provide things such as the Father gives to the heirs of His Kingdom; act the part of kings, as persons called to and having a higher inheritance, and give alms. And there is a reason—it is a separating principle—let your treasure be there, your heart will be there also, you will be formed for God. It is not, observe, the value of the gifts meritoriously, but the effect internally. Such is the position, the suitable position of believers in the Kingdom of the Lord; hereunto are they called. God is so not ashamed to be called their God.

But further, as to their position, and character, and establishing motives: Be not only loose, and living with your hearts upon what is yours, in fellowship with God, be as men looking for the positive subversion of the present state of things, not as desirable in itself, but as waiting for their Lord, as thereby indeed responsible for His absence. It forms especially their character (they are always expecting) their loins girded and their lights burning. All is as if Christ was then come, or on His way actually. It is also as "For their Lord." And "He that shall come will come." We may remark the perfectness of the principles, here set forward, of the Kingdom, and the intervening dispensation as here set forward—perfect assurance which is the root of all godly service and familiarity of holiness: "Fear not, it is your Father's good pleasure to give," founded on the holy, influencing favour of the Father, "Your Father." For the assurance of the Christian, as we have often said, is not the assurance of safety merely, but the assurance of love, of a child.

We have here the place and relationship of Christ beautifully. "It is the Father's good pleasure to give you

the Kingdom." Christ then even in heavenly places in the cloud beyond the Kingdom takes, as He has taken for ever, for us the place of Servant, girds Himself, and comes forth and serves us. This is beautiful. Yet afterwards we have in the inheritance Christ Lord, and we are servants though He makes the faithful one ruler over all that He has. All this is beautifully in its place.

—33—37. This paragraph is worthy of all study as exhibiting the high and holy confidence, motives (and therefore character) and watchfulness of the Christian, crowned with that which is its glory and crown. He will gird Himself, and make them sit down to meat, and will go forth and serve them.

—35. This is the state for blessing; v. 42, the service for inheritance.

—36. Observe the introduction of this paragraph, and consider whether it be merely of the type or the thing spoken of; if so, it throws large light on the passage.

—37. I suspect this has a special primary Jewish reference; if so, the return from the marriage would be manifest. It shews, I think, not only that we shall be happy in the blessed enjoyment of what is heavenly, but that the Lord Jesus—blessed thought!—will still minister to us of His own fulness of blessing. He makes them sit down to meat, and comes forth, and serves them. It is not the thought of communicating of His own fulness in Himself, but it is of causing them to feast where He places them in rest, and ministering to their happiness—an infinite source of joy! Verse 44 is the conferred inheritance; so that we have both parts of the heavenly joy. The condition of the world, Jews, and saints is fully drawn out here.

—38. It is remarkable that men have turned that uncertainty, which was ordered to keep men always expecting, though the time was not by-and-by, and that it should be used by men as a reason for not expecting at all.

I do not know if I have clearly noticed the full character of verse 35 and following. After the gracious encouragement of verse 32, we have the treasure and affections and the heart directed to the Lord's coming, the constant expectation of whom was to characterize the Christian. The result of this is perfect blessedness in the house, rest and the finest of the wheat, and Christ occupied with serving us for our joy. What follows is service, and here it is not the joy within, but ruling over all His goods. Both these are the portion of the saints. But on earth we must find the opposition of the world of man's flesh marring our nearest affections.

Besides what is noted, in heaven we do not want lights burning. The glory of God lightens it, and the Lamb is its lamp. In this dark world we have to shine as lights—open profession. But this is, whatever the blessing, a strain on faith, as having our loins girded. It is not rest but diligence of heart. Affections tucked up, and confession made. Lights in a dark world. When He comes we sit and enjoy the best of heaven, He Himself ministering to us. According to gift we take in this world this service of love—we minister Christ to His household in the service of love; only here it is measured and suited—there it is full and the fulness of Christ.

Note too further, the fire was already kindled, persecution and rejection—what man was—drove back Christ's love so that He was straitened till the baptism of death was

accomplished, but when this very rejection rose (the time being come) to its height, it took the character of that baptism, and only opened the floodgates of full unmingled love. Such is the wisdom of God. We must have the fire, but we enjoy the flow of love infinitely more blessedly than if sin had not been there, for it is love above all hindrances, properly Divine, superior to evil, redeeming love, and none of the fire can separate us from it.

—39. Here end the general principles as applied to believers, and, acting upon them, the general concluding statement is more abstract, and leads to the question of Peter, which is the occasion of most important prophetic statement relative, morally relative, to the (Gentile) Church.

—41. This is a question by which the statement is specifically made available to the ultimate history of the (Gentile) Church. For though it ought not to have been so, I see distinctly that the fulness of the manifestation of grace here rested in and was confined to the Jewish incorporation in which the Church was founded. The root bore it, and all its vigour here was therein shewn, yet it ought not as to us to be so. And so the Lord leaves it, "Who then is?" The fact is that though partially true, yet *a posteriori* it will appear that none were found save he who therefore took the power to himself. But it is put as a responsible uncertainty, and those who are faithful even though unavailingly so, for it may be so, shall be recognized in that day—unavailingly as to apparent public result to man in the world, but they ought not to despair nor faint, and more faith would do more work. Yet how much more excellent is the uncertainty in which the Lord has left it, *i.e.* the responsibility of the Church to feed, yet

withal supposing the case, and shewing the consequences of neglect. The case put is the Church assuming authority instead of acting as the responsible servant of an absent Master, in the Spirit in which such would, with all the wisdom which one who had communion with Him would, and the carefulness of service towards others as valuable to Him, yet therein and thereby keeping them in order towards Him, and doing the work of substitute-authority, not by authority but by service. Let us observe then the assumption of authority, as though the waiting One was not just going to return, and had left the reins in the hand merely to hold in care and not in will, is the spirit of evil and unfaithfulness, and in fact apostasy in the Church. I say the spirit of it, for it is assuming it in lieu of Christ, arising from putting out of remembrance for our own sake, *i.e.* in atheism. Observe this assumes the flock.

They were attached to now, and associated with the heavenly character of the Kingdom. This world was nought. But what they had of this world they could turn into the heavenly privilege of doing good, and have their treasure in the heavens, where there would be no losing it, and so their heart would be kept there. Thus their character would be heavenly. In the meantime they were to be there as waiting for their Lord, the return of their Lord from the wedding, that when He came and knocked, they might open to Him immediately. The Lord will return from the wedding when He visits His disciples here below, so that there would be applicability to them; but the general aim of the heavenly effect of the calling is here in question. They were to be here, separate from earthly things and waiting for Christ. Their then

position, it is true, was of the earthly disciples, but He was calling them to heavenly hopes, into which He enters more fully a few verses further on. Here only they were to be on the watch. It is not prophecy but character and position. There are no signs; they were to be heavenly, separate and waiting for Christ. In xvii. and xxi. we have historical signs and circumstances for people upon earth; here separation in spirit from it. For those who thus wait, Jesus is still a Servant. He will make them sit down to meat, and come forth and serve them. Girded to serve as Man, His ear has been bored in death, and in joy He comes forth delighting in disciples so walking. It is His joy to release them from their endurance, and watching, and service. Their faithfulness is His delight, and He sets them to the feast, and honours their faithfulness in honouring them with delight. Thus they were left therefore in uncertainty, and so the Church is left; it has no time. It is always to wait, because it has no time. Every moment is its time in desire and duty, as the world's for negligence and carelessness. The Jews have a time, days and years and earthly computations belong to them, and therefore signs; to us it may be second watch or third watch. Blessed only, if we are found watching. It is an hour we take pleasure in. This is a very important point.

In that which follows, Peter putting the question of the application of the passage, we have the portion of those who serve faithfully in the Church distinctly and positively given. It is not merely waiting faithfully. They will be set down to the feast, but serving faithfully they will be set over all His goods—an encouraging thought, though not the highest in the patience of labour in hope. He who

distributes faithfully to the need of the household—our present service—shall be set over all the Lord's goods, and He is Heir of all things and Lord of all, when He returns to take possession of all He made and will inherit. On the other hand, the principle and character of the Church's apostasy is putting off in heart the Lord's coming. This is the great economic stay of heavenly-mindedness, and by which the Church preserves its own peculiar calling and character. The expectation of the Lord kept the servant on the watch, and detached from the world, and faithful in the service to be rendered to the Lord's household. On the other hand, the putting it off left him to his own will. The servant says not: My Lord will not come. It is not a doctrinal denial, but: "My Lord delayeth His coming." Next, he acts with authority and violence towards the servants, not as serving them for his Lord's sake, and as done to Him. Further, he mixes with the world; he eats and drinks with the drunken. Well! the Lord of that servant, for that servant has a Lord though he has acted so independently, will come when he does not expect it, make good His authority, and though long in the house, set there in a certain sense, his portion is appointed with the unbelievers in judgment. Such is the portion of the apostate Church, as of the nation which preceded it, and failed like it.

Further, there would be in detail a righteous adjudgment to the servant—he who knew, and did it not, many stripes, and he who knew it not, and did it not, few stripes. All was in ruin, all guilty; sin and neglect had produced ignorance. But the righteous distinction would be made. Note, they would be treated in the responsibility of the

place they held, though they might not serve nor have spiritual right there. And so to whom much was given, of him much would be required, and if much has been afforded, more will be demanded. Thus the Lord unfolds the place and principles of service, as before of position, through His rejection and its consequences, and sole force. Further, we have to note here a manifest distinction between the called Church, called to wait for its Lord, and the ignorance of heathenism and the like, and the far more terrible portion of the Church. That servant, alluding specially to the one of whom He had just spoken, who knew his Lord's will and prepared not himself *i.e.*, for his Lord that was coming, and did not do according to His will, shall be beaten with many stripes—but he who—it is not said: Did not prepare himself, for he was not at all in that position, but "Committed things worthy of stripes," acted evilly according to his natural heart, as a heathen might do, shall be beaten with few stripes. The distinction is clear, and the judgment of the Lord as righteous, so is it solemn thereon, exceeding solemn, for the professing Church.

And again (43) "That servant," *i.e.*, who was put in the place to feed. Faithfulness in the stewardship in absence is the warrant for placing over much, even over "All his goods." It is the conservative power of the Church, faithfulness in which would constitute it over all the Lord's possessions; yet shall it be true of the Remnant, though, that it might be even here of grace, this was a manifest failure. But as to the corporate body it is (45) "If that servant should say," etc. So ever has been the way. The condition as a body has failed, but the Lord has had a

people who have lived by His faithfulness, on the principle in faithfulness, who have had the privileges in His faithfulness and mercy in Christ, which the body have forfeited, and which indeed was altogether forfeited in their formal proposal, and their feelings will be accordingly. The Apostle opened this as to the times of old fully, and spoke of this to come on its moral responsibility as here, which was the only way it could be so effectually spoken of as regarded that responsibility. And when the condition came in which was the healthfully trying subject of moral discernment, then it became appropriately applicable prophetically. But the whole moral estate of the Church in the latter days is most fully and strongly depicted in this passage. I suspect verse 47 means the Church, and 48 those who ought to have been converted, but the unconverted heathen world. I have thought it was Protestantism, and the religions of ignorance. The principle is broadly stated in general, and thus indeed we may always learn and apply. But the Lord's reflections on these subjects, drawn from the full sources of the whole scenes, present to His mind in the Spirit-taught purpose of their realities rests, and then under the guidance of God (for as the Spirit was not given in measure, yet it is only, as it were, the heads given to us—certain eyelet holes, small in the light and but as isolated in itself, but looked at close in the same Spirit in measure giving inlet to see and scan much, and the general purpose of what is within) give us the affecting consideration of the result; for these heads give all the moral force when seen, they shine with the light that is within, and distinctively, for we could not simply bear the blaze.

—45. There are two points mark this state of the rulers of the Church — self-indulgence, and the assumption of authority as such founded on their assuming to be in the Lord's place, and putting away the idea of His coming again, so as to lose the sense of their own tenure. Wherever therefore this thought began to work in the Church, *i.e.*, where they were not presently looking for His coming, this spirit found scope and began to work. The right thought of it is THE ground of service.

—48. This closes the exhortation. Then the fruit of His rejection, but even before it the effect was produced. Still His death must come in for the outflowing of the counsel of God in love.

—49. The Lord pursues the effect of the Gospel of a rejected Saviour. He was come to send a fire on the earth, not the crown of natural creation earthly blessing among His people. Messiah—the Head and Crown, but cast out and rejected by the will of man and the rejection of His people—He stands in the place, not of the Head and Bond of Creation, but of the occasion of illwill, division, and animosity and judgment. "I am come to send a fire on the earth." This would be by the testimony to Him rejected but accepted of God. But what could He now seek or think of, if before the time as it were, even then in His lifetime, the living Messiah who, in form at least, came as the Head of blessing and the Bringer of peace, was the Kindler of this fire? He could wish now for nothing. His natural mission was turned (and necessarily) into the opposite. His other glory was not come. Nothing could come of the first, and the second was yet with the Father. But the truth was there was something needful before Him;

He had a baptism to be baptized with. He had His own portion to go through in this, and all the results must be deferred till then. The blessing, and the title of blessing and peace, and over creation depended on the accomplishment of that which set Him in redemption power through suffering in that; see Heb. ii. Thence, as became God the Sovereign, for whom and by whom are all things, He could assert His title to bless, and bless in spite of the power of evil; here, creation being ruined, He could not. Hence, how was He straitened till it was accomplished! He could neither bless in the ruin (now fully discovered in His rejection, for He came to bless, or to present blessing, while because so come it was proved irreparably bad, and actually rejected it by its will, in the nearest point to Himself, the favoured Jews) nor in spite of the ruin from a new source, for His baptism of this, to wit, of death and consequent resurrection, was not yet accomplished. But, though He could not bless yet in spite of the evil (though He might heal a few sick folk) at any rate the evil and opposition was fully manifested in the race He came amongst, so that He could say: "From henceforth" (52), for we have seen all this discourse was on His rejection. In the sense of this His rejection, the discovery of the state of things by it, the Lord says: "Suppose ye that I am come to send peace on earth?" Though peace on earth was the nature and essence here of His coming, if received, and shall be when in power, and therefore producing effect, and not seeking it—"I tell you, Nay, but rather division." This opposition of effect and principle opens a vast field of view on the judgment of the condition of the world into which He came,

and its entire state of ruin and alienation, and the presentation of the good only making this active.

The introduction of a new principle would break up the closest ties, and strongest bonds of nature. But this was proved in what was nearest to God, nearest to the Lord (and hence whose opposition was the strongest and most prominent) being evil, as if blessing had been then it would have been, as it shall be in the new world, chief in blessing. It took place, and here is applied to the Jews—there the principle had its force and application, for there the Lord came. It is one which carries its truth with it; it was signalized there, as the law was withal. This application, essentially to them, of the great truth, application founded on the fact that He came to them, follows hereon.

The Lord having thus in pressure of Spirit explained His position, turns to the multitude and explains theirs connected with it, for judgment hung by it on the whole nation. They discerned the signs of earth and heaven, but the dealings of God with themselves they saw nothing of. They had the form of the Lord's people, but conscience was not at work; they were hypocrites. This time when the Lord was in the way with them, and presented to them they could not discern. How did not they discern? For there is something astonishing to the power and simplicity of truth in the utter obscurity of error and want of integrity, for when the eye is single the whole body is full of light. It is daylight, and nothing seen or understood! "Yea, why of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" Conscience ought to have judged the Lord; and the evidence of His glory not being there, they ought, oppressed by their own consciences of the state of things, and how matters stood in

Jerusalem before God, for it was written with a sunbeam. For, continues the Lord, in human affairs you would well have the prudence to make up the matter with your adversary, knowing you were wrong and anticipating the judgment. For indeed, as the Lord thus plainly declares as the result of all this discourse (*i.e.* as to them) the Lord was in the way with them, and did they not submit and reconcile themselves to the Lord now, approaching judgment in the way, they would soon be delivered to the judicial dealings of the Lord, and not come out till they had "received of the Lord double of all their sins." The actual state of His beloved but rejecting, and rebellious, and therefore necessarily judged and chastened people, but being His they will come out, for by this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and they shall be restored by the faithfulness and supreme mercy of the Lord's love, when the chastening is accomplished.

"I am come to send fire upon earth," *i.e.* I am come, drawing from the forethought of the result of the preceding statement, I am come to bring judgment upon the earth, but judgment which has its operation in the mutual destruction and devouring of the world within itself. It is sent down from heaven, cast upon earth, but it finds its fuel there. This was to be the full result of the manifestation of Christ, for the course of the Lord's mind previously in judging of the final state of the Church had led Him to this, *i.e.* of Christ witnessed of as glorified, *quod nota.* But what even if now My very manifestation in humiliation, before the glory appears, cause this spirit of destruction? The Lord speaks of it as certain, as surely coming—"I am come to send," as a fact, but with reference of horror at its necessity—His

nature averted from judgment, His Spirit not. However He Himself, the Lord observes, must go through the fiery baptism and passage point of His death before this could be fully brought out. Still He was straitened till He should have passed through it, for that was the great crisis of triumph in which the power of darkness should make its critical effort against the light of the Redeeming Man who then should appear in the glory of salvation. But, as it were, the sensitive murmurings of their exposed enmity were then even accumulating, on one hand a pregnant witness of the fire to be kindled, and on the other pressing upon the Spirit of the Lord as of that which He had to go through and overcome, for evil is turned into judgment when Christ has triumphed, and the devil is always his own executioner, and so indeed man.

This point, this crisis, even His own death, in which all the question was settled as to power, the Lord came to. Hitherto, upon the basis of the result in the Church, the Lord's mind had been working in Spirit all through, as it were, upon His part in the awful conflict in light and darkness, with immersion and emergence of His glory. As to His trial in it, it had been brought, through the results of the Christ and the purpose of His mission, to the "Shall have been accomplished" of this crisis, and baptism of His soul in the power, the horribleness, the death-whelming power of evil, which was till He said: "It is finished" (John xix, 30). Then it was gone through in mind, in Spirit. Then He breaks out into the strength of practical results: "Think ye that I have come to give peace in the earth? Nay, I say unto you." It is very beautiful and most

striking—what shall I say more justly? thus to see the Lord emerging in practical warning from the deep, affecting, infinitely deep thoughts which His own mind had been going through, with that strength of confidence of thought which the deep inward view of things gave, as though others were to be undeceived in what nothing but seeing things as He saw them could fully set their minds free and right upon. It is the breaking out from this present perception of truth, where His soul had been in actual feeling, prospective feeling, seeing through it all, yea, in it all: "Think ye that I have come to give peace on earth? Nay, I say to you, but rather division," for from "Henceforth" (for "Already it has been kindled") "there shall be five in one house divided." Remark the force of the expression as looking back upon all that had been in His mind truth. The prophets spoke of that day as to the second coming. The prophets, and Spirit of prophecy in Christ, and throughout also speak of "In that day." But there is a "From henceforth" as to the conflict, the manifestation of an accomplished salvation, a rejected Son of God, a desolate (just now approximating) house of God's people, a tried world, a people sown in the Spirit—all the great mystery of godliness in its moral power and separating energy. This arose from a strength of principle absorbing into itself more powerfully than all existing associations, and indeed also producing the positive hatred of the claim, first from its authority, secondly from its character. The circumstances of the division will show the complete dislocation of ordinary ties. It is not a party formed, but individual principle throwing people into conjunction.

—54. This verse is addressed not to the prophetic

character which He was able to use with His disciples as those interested in it, but to the multitude on the principles of personal responsibility, arising out of the thought of the very manifestations of which He was the occasion in the world which gave, in another point of view, occasion to the prophetic declaration. Their responsibility first upon the evident signs of God's dealings with the world. Secondly, their responsibility of judging in their own consciences what was right, and the righteous consequences of the conduct of the Jews. The conclusion derived to them was this—God is in the way with the Jewish Remnant—Come to agreement with Him, that He turn not, yea, that thou turn not Him into a Judge; then He will deal with thee accordingly. He will deliver thee up to the consequences of judgment, and thou shalt not escape till thou hast paid everything, yea, received double of all thy sins. Prophecy is always to the Church the "Whatsoever I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you." "Shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I do?" Responsibility to the world and so justly. How long will the Church deny itself its privileges, and say that God ought to treat it, or treat itself as a stepmother, its children as the world? When this was the measure of national judgment, and God dealt with it in measure, then there was a coming out, yet so as by mercy, and as to individuals. And sin—God in His nature was absolutely averse from it, and, the moment He becomes a Judge, must put it out of His sight for ever. The moment He becomes a Judge all is over, but this is not so when it is merely the dealings against Himself in a relative character to which He could adjudge punishment (chastisement) as seemed righteous and good. And it is

this restoration of which the Prophets are so full. And here the sense of "Against Thee only" etc. And when the enemies, the instruments are come to their height of wickedness, they, put out of the way in judgment, will learn the boon of peace to forgiven Israel; see note on verse 58. From verse 54 to end of chap: xiii, is the time for the people, as chap: xii. 1—53 is the portion of believers on His and their rejection. In xii. 54 to end of xiii, the state and result of it for the nation is fully brought out. The two passages are, so to speak, the counterpart for the two classes; only in the former passage He rejects setting right order and justice in the nation.

—56, 57. These verses afford the two great principles of the whole question, and make the responsibility of the Church, for it ought to know the signs, and it ought, if a Church, if walking in fellowship with God, to know His mind morally—what could and could not agree with Him. "Can two walk together except they be agreed?"

—58. The "For" probably marks connection. It follows on v. 57, as to the "For," I suppose, though that of course on the general sense. It applies here to our Lord's proximate coming. God was now in the way with them; surely it was time to agree. "Discern" the signs; "judge" what is right. Why do you not without signs even judge of what is morally due to this people? Why do you not, when God has manifested Himself morally to be in the way with you, see in your own minds the time to come forward for reconciliation, lest you should be destroyed? Verses 58, 59 follow. And with this connects itself the parallel passage in Matthew. God accepts no offering but of a renewed mind, the person acceptable in the way of

grace before any offering can be made. Therefore agree whiles thou art in the way quickly. Seek reconciliation. It was so important and so urgent a truth that our Lord brings it in when the moral subject gave occasion for its introduction. And this gives peculiar strength to the connection of the following verses. The main subject ends here at xiii, 9, inclusive.

The connection, as we have said is quite manifest, and bears the stamp of the principles we have before adverted to. A special case of judgment (as they supposed) was mentioned to the Lord as He talked on these subjects, falling in as it were with the subject. He immediately applies it generally to a broad principle and sure, therefore universal fact. There are two points to be noticed, that which God looked for and must have for His agreement with them, repentance or they would perish. The former was national, this personal. Two could not walk together except they were agreed. This was the one only way of agreement with God. The general result to them, the explication and application is too obvious to need comment. It is a simple and a noble testimony.

Chapter XIII.

—1. This verse marks the connection, as indeed is plain, of this instruction of repentance with what goes before in its moral application. The Spirit of God takes occasion through another circumstance, occurring about the same time, to give further of the Lord's testimony directly on the same subject. A like judgment would come

on the whole nation as on the victims of Pilate's wrath, or the judgment of God in the tower of Siloam. Unless they repented, they should "All perish in like manner." He adds the parable of the fig tree. It seems to me that this includes the work of the Holy Ghost by the twelve Apostles up to Stephen, as well as the Lord's, it was the ministry of the blessed Spirit, the "This year also" afforded by the intercession of Jesus. The Lord looked for fruit three years, and there was none. It only cumbered the ground, rendered the ground useless, and unprofitable, and inactive. God could do nothing with it, nor man, for so is a fruitless, nominal people of God, unjudged. It turns to nothing neither the accomplishment of Providence, nor the manifestation of grace. Judgment was pronounced upon: "Why does it also render the ground useless?" But the Vinedresser, the Lord Jesus, intercedes that He may use all means. If these failed: "After that." It is not merely "Then." It was given up to judgment as the Lord: "Let there be never more fruit of thee for ever." For it was by a new covenant, and a new name that Israel is introduced to blossom, and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit. Now it was to be cut down. Such was the judgment of God, the issue of His patient long suffering and mercy.

—10. The Sabbath was the sign of the old covenant. But hypocrisy, which always takes form instead of holiness and power, had taken possession of the nation and its rulers, and the Lord pursues His way of power in mercy despite their forms, putting forward, though righteously always as in mercy and asserting the reality of the privileges in grace, the breaking down these signs, and impliedly their existing relationship with God, while He confirmed the

basis which really they despised ; they loosed their ox and their ass. Satan had bound a daughter of Abraham ; should not He loose her ? Note here with what condemnatory authority in the matter the Lord now speaks. He introduces power in deliverance in favour of Abraham's children, but He slights the form in which it stood, and denouncingly condemns those who now held it in that shape. In that sense this is very important. It had a strong active transition character.

—11. Christ shows the hypocrisy of their maintenance of the old covenant, and thereon shows the new character of the Kingdom, the King not being there, as a great power and dissemination of doctrine. On the question if the Remnant was numerous, shows the cross-character of the path—people must count the cost of building and overcoming ; the multitudes who had taken up with Him He would not own when Abraham and Gentiles from all parts would be in the Kingdom. He was in the hands of God till His time came, but a prophet could not perish out of Jerusalem ; the guilt was all found there ; her house was desolate, and she would not see Him till she repented in the last day, according to Psalm cxviii. But the Jehovah who had loved her bewailed her self-earned doom.

Evidently equally the setting aside Israel all would perish, the fig tree be removed after every effort—hypocrisy in ceremonial observances contrasted with the power of God. The Kingdom not now in power but as a mustard seed and leaven. The Remnant marked by earnest effort to enter at the strait gate, workers of iniquity rejected (no peace to the wicked) and the Gentiles let into the Kingdom. But it was not in Galilee by man's power and wickedness, but

in judgment on Jerusalem that the Lord would now be perfected, nor see Him again who had visited it in love until they through grace repented, and were ready to receive Him coming in the name of Jehovah—till Psalm cxviii.

—20. My impression is that when the dative is used for time it is always as one whole, point, or object, when the accusative it is a space during which. Thus, taking the common reading, Judges characterised the period of 450 years; He nourished them during forty years—He was going on doing it all the time. So "For a long time" (ἱκανῷ χρόνῳ, Acts viii, 11.); so Rom. xvi, 25. Thus τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ("the third day," dative) and τρίτην ἡμέραν ("the third day," accusative) would not have the same force, though in result the sense would be the same. In the first I should think of that one day so characterised; with τρίτην I think of two days elapsed before. In a word, the accusative is duration, the dative epoch, though in sense they often run into one another. Thus according to the common reading, the statement would not be "during 450 years," but 'up to,' 'as far as,' *i.e.* counting from the end of Desert. So that Joshua, Elders, and Cushan rishathaim, would have to be deducted, say some 45 years. I have supposed in computing, 48 and 402 to Saul. So that the chronology is in no way changed. I hold clearly that the building the Temple dates from the settlement in the Land, as if I said: 'In England from the time the Saxons came from Germany, they have had elective kings.' This would certainly mean as to since the settlement in England. 402 supposes each period given to be a whole year, which is surely not to be so taken, and to make up the 480, there are 84—Saul 40, David 40, Solomon 4. So that the ten years allowed to Elders in

the 45 may well be cut down to next to nothing. But I suspect the 25 given by Josephus to Joshua is too short.

—17. "And all the crowd." How remarkable and uniform a circumstance this is.

—18—21. These two paragraphs are, as it were, supplemental paragraphs to the long paragraph which we have been considering.

This appears to me our Lord's instructions as to the place the Sabbath bore in His Kingdom as manifested. But there is another point in it, the way in which love overlooks circumstances which superstition and unbelief looks to take its credit from. Therefore our Lord shows the reality of the thing by showing that they did the same things, or worse, as to the day when selfishness was concerned, and the only difference was He did it out of love. In verse 16 the contrast in moral rectitude and their own principles is perfectly strongly put. There is then the contrast between false and true religion in this—with their formal character and detected character—true needs no detection, it stands before the world such as it is, and has no object to act for but to show its principles by using them. This action of truth the people will generally receive. The moral estimate of things is a great criterion of true and false religion. False religion can have nothing but what is competent to those who have none. True consists in what none but those who have it can have, for it is of God. The rest is acquiesced in as occasion requires. Wherever forms have the place of mercy, there we may be assured there is no true religion. The importance of that which has not moral communion with God, and seeks its own importance, is lost when form is lost of which it is the head, and things are estimated as they

affect God and man. The real character of the Gospel is developed then in this. The character of its progress is next marked.

—19. I suspect myself that it is stated under two characters, as planted amongst the Jews and yet the very heathen kings finding their repose under its influence, no matter how ; and this as a tree. Secondly, in its general pervasion of that, into which it was put, as a system according to the purpose of God, as the leaven leavens all, but all is not leaven, or indeed then there is none at all ; but here merely its pervading the limits assigned to it by God *i.e.* filling generally the (Gentile) Church in its ordinary sense.

Thereon the Lord pursues what the dispensation and His labour results into. It is not a kingdom set up in power in the midst of the people who were children of the Kingdom, but a seed Sower. Still the Jewish people were God's own garden ; He has His own right whatever men may have done there. It was "Like a grain of mustard seed which a man took and cast into his own garden," and it increased so that other powers and strangers came and lodged in the branches. Such its formal character. Sown, then it became a great tree, a public power of influence in the world. Next, it was a doctrinal influence not having any relation to Israel, but which, by the ministration of the service of the Church, would spread itself in the given measure of God's assigned providence. Such would the dispensation be. The internal character and judgment was not in question here, but the replacing of the old economy by this—and how ? Not by the Son of Man in power then.

The Lord, in what follows, still pursues this subject in this change. If the be true in Israel, are the Remnant to

be saved few? He was on His way to the final catastrophe of the nation in the rejection of Him at Jerusalem. The question therefore came to be important, perhaps put in curiosity not with intelligence, but on the vague traditions drawn, without application, from the Prophets. But the Lord, as so timely ordered, answers it in its full power, still His rejection in view, for He was naturally in the way then.

—24. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in" (not at the strait gate) "and shall not be able"; but so it will be. "When once" (and now He proceeds to give it direct application) "the Master is risen up and shut to the door." Then from v. 26, the Lord gives it its full and direct application to them and their circumstances, and the judgment of the nation, and the introduction of the Gentiles in general terms, and full accomplishment yet of all the promises to the saints. They should come from East, and West, and North, and South, and sit down in the Kingdom of God. But it was on new principles, and under order of supreme righteousness—there would be last first, and first last. Meanwhile those who claimed local association with Him lost all title: "I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, workers of iniquity." It was moral association now, and the power of the Kingdom new and heavenly. As this was grace, the Lord says here; "There are last who shall be first." The rejected Remnant, cast out as evil and rebellious, became followers of the mind of God and of Jesus the despised and rejected of men from whom the nation hid their face.

—31, *et seq.* But Jerusalem must accomplish her iniquity

though judgment was to be passed on all. For the Lord now speaks in plain terms as to what they were. It is not the gentleness which conciliates the most opposed, but the plain denouncement of the ungodly. As He had denounced those who held the form of power in the synagogue, and declared the ruler hypocrite before the congregation, so now the Lord speaks equally plain as to him who, not as son of David nor according to God, possessed the throne of Israel nominally. The Lord now went to His death, and had only to give it its full character and form. He denounces this false shepherd who held the flock, but it is not he who is to kill Him. He was perfectly safe, for the full accomplishment of the counsels of God, and of the guilt of His beloved Jerusalem. When it was the iniquity of another, the Pharisees could easily use the form of interest and kindness, but the Lord passes it by as He judges Herod, and rests in the sureness of Divine counsels. He feared not the one, the other was needless. They might return and communicate to Herod the real course and mind of God. It was the full expression of the now ripened counsel of God. If wickedness was on this side, and rejection had now reached its height, it was merely that the counsels of God had now come to the full, and in blessed assurance and calmness of Spirit Jesus pursued His course till they were accomplished, till He was "perfected" (τελειοῦμαι). It was not Herod's enmity nor the Pharisees' care which could destroy or preserve him. He was safe in the centre of Divine purposes to be perfected for the centre of fuller glory than fallen Israel could afford, even the perfect glory of all the Divine counsels. He entered into these now. The mind of God rested not on Herod; he was nought in the question—

a fox pursuing his own interests in the flock of God; nor on the hypocritical pretences and favour of reckless Pharisees. His mind, and heart, and eye were on Jerusalem, the beloved city, now to accomplish her unfaithfulness. Till this moment came Jesus walked in the security of the Divine counsels. Blessed calmness! He who feels deeply is always calm, as viewing things in the Lord. It is not the eager obtrusion of circumstances which affect his mind; he sees deeper, he is more deeply occupied with things as they are before the Lord. What depth in the expression: "But I must needs walk to-day!" My course of mercy will proceed without the Lord's regarding Herod, till beloved Jerusalem, beloved in spite of all, have accomplished her guilt. Then the scene is closed; all is closed here below, no more room for this work on the earth where her guilt is to the full. "I shall be perfected," for other counsels, and for deeper joys, joys which in persevering mercy and purpose shall rise upon Jerusalem, beloved Jerusalem herself, in spite of and in pardon of the sins—What a heart had the Lord! How Divine then for us! Indeed we have God's heart and ways, and brought into all our circumstances and sins.

The great object of this passage is the distinctive judgment of Jerusalem. In this the Lord reveals Himself as Jehovah, her of old time Protector and Cherisher—her whom He had now at last visited in this extraordinary care and condescension of grace, trying all things but in vain. It was man, and man favoured, and therefore man rebellious and scornful. She would now be left to the effects of her ways till they owned Him, saying, as in Ps. cxviii, in the latter day: "Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the

Lord." Their house was left to them till then, as they would not have Him. The whole of this chap. xiii, is a distinct and definite comment, and application to Jerusalem of the question raised on His rejection in chap. xii, and the parabolic exposition of their circumstances at the close of it. The Lord here resumes, in the general train of circumstances, one or two great principles connected with His rejection, and the moral principles involved therein, of which this Gospel is so full, and then passes on to the Gospel as contrasted with their state and principles. Repeating, under another parabolic form, the rejection of the nation, not here under the form of seeking fruit but of rejected grace which was a further step, the refusal of invited guests. Israel sinned in this double character—she bore no fruit to Him by whom she was dressed, and they refused the invitation to the Kingdom of God.

Chapter XIV.

This chapter pursues some details as to the principles involved in the break up of Judaism. We have Sabbath-breaking, and their hypocrisy proved, and they reduced to silence. Entire self-abasement the way of being exalted; Christ the blessed Witness of it. Grace to mark our spirit, the result in another world in resurrection—a resurrection which belonged to the just only. The remark of one then brings out what was going on as to the Kingdom. A supper made, Jews would not come, the wretched ones of them called, and then the Gentiles, and the Jews as such

excluded. Multitudes might follow Him then, but to do so really there must be breaking with all, the Cross. The cost had better be counted, and, if all cannot be given up, not to pretend to follow Him. Salt must be salt, or it is nothing and good for nothing. Then in xv., xvi., the dealings and effects of grace, and the opening of another world with the curtain drawn, are fully given.

—1. *Et seq.* Again, the Lord before the Pharisees, judging the hypocrisy of their conduct, substitutes grace for law in that which formed not the moral requirement but the sign of the Covenant connecting them by the law with the rest of God. They watched Him then on this point because, as we have seen, an observance which cost them no lust and hindered them from no sin in this unregenerate state ministered to pride and not to holiness. Here the Lord does not await their judgment, but circumstances, as He now was in view of the crisis of Jerusalem's lot, and His own leaving them. He puts Himself forward, for now He was seeking nothing of them, but shewing them the truth, and asks them: "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?" They would not commit themselves, and they understood not grace. They were silent, and He wanted not their approval, and again silences them by an appeal to their own conduct where their own interest was concerned. He would not be hindered in grace by the judgment of hypocrisy, nor take a form of piety at the expense of grace. He then proposes two great principles of the new man, exactly opposite to Pharisaism and formal self-righteousness—true, unfeigned self-abasement as the only means of real exaltation, and the principle and way of charity which looks only to the resurrection

of the just as the time when its principles and objects are recognised, and recognised of the Most High. He does it moreover not in abstract principles but in plain intelligible application to facts, not addressed *in nubibus* as an exalted doctrine, but in present judgment on those amongst whom He was, and by whom He was invited, for true and full morality always judges the world. But consequent on the grace which sets aside the mere legal ceremonial sign, or shews it passing away as under law, entire humiliation and humbleness in it, and separation from the world in the exercises of charity, and relinquishing the habits of owning the world to be owned, are distinctly set forth as cardinal principles now in the Kingdom of God. The mention of the moment, the resurrection of the just, when the result of these principles display themselves, gave occasion to a sort of suitable remark for the character of Jesus by one of the other guests: "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God." The Lord takes occasion to shew that they had rejected the invitation of God, the leaders, and instructors, and guides, and that God would seek, and fill His house from the poor of the flock, and from among the Gentiles —shews the door of grace (associated as grace must be with a much higher standard of morality, for it is nearer to God and the display of His character) opened, on the rejection of favour and kindness first shewn to them.

It seems to me that chap: xiii attaches itself much more to law, *i.e.* to what Christ had title to expect and find among them, and to existing privilege and their state under this, and chap: xiv to grace and favour shewn to them in His coming. And He indeed had humbled Him-

self and sought the poor and needy for the feast of His Father's house, though He teaches others therein, for He is the perfection of His own teaching, the Light Himself, for indeed in Him was life. They were dead and bore no fruit if He sought it from them; but He the life shewn in the darkness, "The life was the light of men."

—15. From this verse the Lord depicts the result of His invitations in grace, as before on seeking fruit, for there He was Intercessor for the fig-tree He had dressed when fruit was required, here He invites in grace, and on rejection of grace allows none to come in. As we have said, it was a further step. That which is marked accordingly here is not evil or sin but indifference to grace. The common (lawful, if you please) things of life were preferred to the invitation, and this, above all things, marked the insensibility and evil of the human heart, and of this nation in particular, treated thus as the friends of the Most High and of His Son. He came to seek fruit—there was none; He prolonged mercy in intercession. He invites in grace to His Kingdom, and they ALL make excuse; their farm, merchandise, natural inclinations, all preferred to the favour and invitation of the Lord.

—18. We have the value of "I must" here. It means simply: I prefer all to God—my inclination and every thing of which I am the centre to that of which He is. This was the answer to the topical remark on the blessedness of eating bread in the Kingdom, which negligently assumed, as usual, that somebody or other would be there, and nobody was to be judged. All were, by the Lord. Awful word! Both in righteousness, and proffered grace. But this provokes the Lord to abounding mercy,

manifesting even in their rejection the riches of the grace they had despised, and, if passing by the despisers, all that had apparent claim as friends, using it as the occasion to open the door wider to the worst, worthless and claimless, because the most needy that could be found, that grace might be displayed fully even in judgment, for He wrought and came in grace, and was not to be stayed in it.

—24. This is the full judgment on the Jews properly so called, *i.e.* the Jewish leaders of the nation who stood as chief in the way of God, and represented them. The streets and lanes need hardly be said to be the despised of the Jews, Galileans, the poor of the flock, and the like. In the highways and hedges doubtless the Gentiles are included, but it is the great principle which is proposed, the active, mystic, and laborious (and it was needful) exercise of grace to fill the house of God—scattered Israel, not unmanifested Gentiles. Hence glorifying itself the more, and active because rejected, that the refusal of man might exalt instead of disappoint it. "Compel them to come in that my house may be filled." This was the consequence of Jewish rejection. Such the sovereignty of God (in exercise)! It is a blessed picture. But the power, riches of grace did not alter the necessity of entering in at the straight gate—renunciation of all of self, and of devotedness.

—25. But, as we have seen, the abounding and activity of grace, so this induces necessarily conflict; as the rejection of Jesus involved rejection, the activity of goodness involved the sacrifice of all in a world in possession of the enemy—the cost of all that tied us to it, and the opposition of the prince of it. If one made inroads in his

kingdom one could not keep its outward blessing if one made war upon him. Of this Jesus warns the multitudes. They followed Him as an easy thing, interested and attracted, but not knowing whither He went or whither it led them. He tells them plainly: You cannot follow Me without sacrificing all, life and all. There is the principle of the new dispensation and its grace; the world is all gone wrong. It is the introduction of an extraordinary power into it, this very grace. The world is adverse. These things are links to it by which Satan will hinder in the war—the heart's hostages in his hands; there must be entire and simple devotedness in the war. So it was in Jesus in the exercise of grace. Such was discipleship to Him, for discipleship, though every Christian is a disciple, and every disciple is a Christian, is more than a Christian. It takes up the Christian in his learning from and following of Jesus in His life and service. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples," for He had borne much fruit. So far as His disciples in this service and following Him, this would be the result or the necessity, and at the commencement that His work and its efficacy might be presented in power and force, it actually involved all this. It always does in the service to which this applies. So far as that service goes the warfare always involves the same consequences, "So then," says the Apostle, "death worketh in us but life in you." He was carrying about in his body the dying (*νέκρωσιν*) of the Lord Jesus, that His life might be manifest in his mortal body; he could not follow Jesus in his service otherwise. Such was his advice to Timothy. No man goeth a warfare at any

time, etc.; and whoever did not carry his cross, set out on a constant course of humiliation, shame, and self-denial, cannot be His disciple.

Another case is supposed in Mark—a hundredfold here in consequence, even the things here, lands, houses, etc., all, as we have noted there, unless wife, with persecution. It is the second stage of the Church, the consequence of labour when a new state of things is arisen, a society formed by it apart from, and to which the world is adverse. It has its joys infinitely greater even in its social intercourse within, but it suffers persecution from without, God's remedy against their effect, their necessary consequence, when held in opposition to the world. Thus far God's providence provides. Alas! the next step is sinking into them, and not receiving from God, and the heart being estranged, corrupt doctrine and practice, and Satan's power, as over those who mix with the world and are far from the Master, comes in. But here the Lord contrasts with rejected Judaism and grace the great master principle. He would have none but faithful followers, and, as Messiah, His followers would have enjoyed the fat of the Land, and abundance of corn and wine. He puts the new dispensation fully on its right footing. It was not to inherit the earth, but to be the salt of it, fulfil a moral service, having a separate, distinct savour from a power not of it or in it as such at all. They were at war, on adverse terms, they must count the cost, and the cost was unmingled, unhesitating devotedness—quit all and follow, or not follow at all. They had a distinct and special service. They were to be not of the world, but to bring a new thing, a new power and positive

principle into the world. That was their one distinctive and only reason for existence as such. Salt was good, but good only because it was salt, and for its saltness. No man would put salt to anything but for its saltness. Moreover if salt was unsavoury, what should salt it? There was nothing salt but salt, and this not being so was good for nothing. So with Christians, with those who profess His Name—it is addressed to us. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." So the Lord says, "They cast it out"; that is all that comes of it. Here the Lord closes this part of His comparison, and enters at once, as the Holy Ghost thus presents it in order to us, on the character and principle of the grace of the new dispensation in its application to the Gospel, and consequently to the Gentiles, and sinners in general.

Chapter XV.

In this chapter even we have the blessed witness that there is One who can perfectly tell the temper and spirit of heaven. What a privilege this is!

The graciousness of the Lord which attracted the despised and miserable ones of the earth, was the full form and character which now presented itself, and excited cavils of those who thought and called themselves righteous, the learned and righteous of the Jewish people. It was not only that He taught them or told them on due repentance they might return, but He received them and ate with them. The Lord has to justify His kindness and grace towards sinners, for man, wretched, infatuated man

would condemn the Lord for being a Saviour and gracious to sinners—pride and self-righteousness despising ever goodness. The great point which the blessed Lord insists on so gloriously and triumphantly here is that it became God to be happy in receiving a poor sinner, that it was His joy, that it became Him as natural to Him, so to speak. This was the character and way of heaven. But in doing this He unfolds the whole order and operation of the economy of grace accomplishing and communicating as flowing from this love—the efficient love of Christ—the operation of the Holy Ghost in the Church by the word, and the reception of the new-hearted sinner by the Father of grace. But in all signalizes this principle, that it was the joy of God Himself to show grace to and receive the poor sinner; and in all this, the fullest appeal to the want and to the ways, the affections and the principles of the human heart. For while the wickedness of the human heart rejects the Gospel, the Lord has perfectly adapted it to all the springs and chambers of need that are in it. It is the unfolding the whole heart of God under the form of the need, and otherwise hopeless affections and wants of ruined man; proud wilful man may reject it, and does but for grace. But this is the reason why mere nature can easily receive it in its affections, when the will is not hurt by it, and yet there be no root. Therefore the Lord can appeal, even in a Pharisee, to what passes in his heart, not when it is in collision with God in pride, for then it is pure wickedness, but when it acts in the mere natural expression of its feelings, and justify God in their own hearts. "What man among you"? He appeals to their own way of acting in a like case. Here is the

difference. Pride is not concerned in submission and return in confession. For, note, this blessed exercise of mercy supposes a great principle, and one of all importance and blessing too, exactly what the natural heart will not admit, saying: Our river is our own, our tongues are our own; who is Lord over us? The sheep belonged to the Shepherd, the money to the woman. This is not the point urged here. I notice it because in the rebellion of man's will it shews why, in a Gospel suited in the very perfection of God to man's heart and need, man left to himself or under the influence of Satan invariably rejects it. Independence, the principle of all evil and misery, is what he loves; the spring and character of restless pride leads him captive. An evil conscience, and unsatisfied will under its governance still carry him further from God.

But here Jesus shews the part and character of supreme grace in God. Hence also the sure character of love thus in exercise, and applied to its object, the perseverance of love until it finds and secures blessing to its object. There is a concentration and care when its object is in need, which shuts out the relationship with what is at ease at the time, it does not sympathise with it, for it is not at ease till it has restored its object to peace, and the comfort of the love it is wandered from. The heart thus in exercise is itself necessarily concerned in the happiness of that it loves. It is its joy, pain, toil, labour for it, till it be, is its food, its only consolation. Thus the Lord presents God to us. He has lost His sheep, always His, but lost in its folly. He compares the numbers to make the principle come out in all its force. Having lost one sheep, He leaves the ninety-nine in the desert, and goes after the lost one (cost what it

will—shame, reproach, scorn, toil, labour, self-denial and loneliness, as accounted hopeless, or ill-judged, He has His known object at heart, they were not the Pharisees' sheep; Blessed Jesus Master!) until He find it—the perfect perseverance of love which could not rest without its object. And Jesus (for He would lay down His life even to have it, for He loved the sheep, and better than Himself *i.e.*, His life in this scene) could not fail to find it, for what cloak, or screen, or craft of Satan could hide it from His search who brought death, the uttermost power of the enemy to the search? The darkness of the power of death, where indeed the sheep were hid, He entered into—aye! the enemy in this sense, He willing, forced Him into. Nowhere else could He find them; they were dead in trespasses and sins, there He found them, for He entered and was willing to do it, and thence delivered, for who could hold love so strong? Hatred and enmity, Satan's power, were weak, nay! opened the door, and forced on the love of Jesus into the place of need and ruin—in the power of a life which was beyond the power of all this darkness, and brought right out of it all His helpless, terrified, and ruined sheep. He laid them on His own shoulders, bore all the burden, not a foot had the poor sheep to put to ground, already weary and worn out; He carried on His own shoulders rejoicing; for it is not the means but the character and way of the love towards the sheep, ever so miserable as it might be, which is here in question. Returning home—the sure sign of joy, a heart overflowing with joy, He calls others to partake with Him in it, counting, as it were, all must be as happy as He in it, and, as ever when very happy oneself, desirous that others

should partake of it too, of our joy. Thus the Lord describes Himself, for in the midst of sorrow His heart could depict what it knew, His love always rising above the evil which surrounded and pressed upon it, only bursting forth more bright and in evidence of greater power.

It seems to me there is a very clear allusion in these parables to the three Persons in the Trinity, in their several work, their several plans if I may so speak, in the economy of grace. In the first two we have the pure supremacy, work, and power of grace, the sheep does nothing, but is brought home. The drachma does nothing, but is found for the joy of the housekeeper. In the last we have the internal action and effect as manifested in his ways, the once wanderer's ways, and his reception by the Father. Besides, it seems to me that the work of Jesus, as the Good Shepherd is clearly marked in the first parable, who recovers, and Himself brings home His sheep—the woman is as the Holy Ghost acting (instrumentally) and while in pure grace using the means, lights the candle, sweeps the house, and searches diligently till she finds, as by the light of the Word set up, and the pains of continual labour, the Holy Ghost searches the world for that which is lost till it be found. Thus the love of God in the same Divine Spirit, the Holy Ghost working in love by these means of light or truth and labour, external instrumentality, works to the same end, finding what is lost. The woman's money was lost, it was precious to her, she sought till she found it because her heart was in it. This, says the Lord, is the Spirit of heaven. Angels, the Angels of God, pure as they are, better than Pharisees surely, enter into its nature and its joy, for they dwell in the

presence of God, breathe the atmosphere of His presence, and have, by continual association with Him, the nature of His joys, what His nature and character is, and love is large, does not require great stimulants of excitement, but exercises itself in its own fulness, draws its resources from itself on sinners repentant, awakes the chord, for the blessed sound and harmony is in love itself, in the presence of God, awakened it is true by the exercise of Divine blessing, but not produced by the result, but joyful because of it. Love is happy, because it loves when another is happy, especially that it loves or that needs. One sinner repentant awakes (Blessed God! what Thy full compassions, and the blessedness of Thy nature, communicated to us) the joy of all heaven, because love reigns there, for God is it. How poor, how meagre, how wretched in the flesh are we! The height of nature makes only higher joy, does not generate pride where this reigns. Yet the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given to us, so that we are privileged to enjoy with the Lord thus, and by the Holy Ghost, co-operate, infinite blessedness in (and through) Christ the Lord. The Lord first speaks of the comparative joy to make it sensible, as of Christ who calls, and then of the positive joy, the thing itself, when the Holy Ghost associates us with it. It is actually (a step so higher) the joy in the presence of the Angels of God, if not amongst proud men.

In the third parable we have this great principle of grace, joy in God, that it became God to be happy, and that He was so in the conversion of a sinner, applied to the detail of a sinner's return, and His reception by the Father. This grace contrasted with the spirit of Pharisaism in

general, or the return of sinners of the Gentiles, with the position of the self-righteous Jews in general—I merely notice the traits which explain, not exactly which apply all this. It is that which is natural which is communicated, for even what the Jews held they held on the principle of creation blessing. The Gentile sinner was in the far country before he spent his goods, and as much so when all was gone. But then he spent what he had of nature, in Satan's country, the far country. There all nature gave gone, for the life of nature spends itself and gains nothing, he began to be in want, to feel the practical effects of nature's spendthrift life. This only attached him more to Satan, for the Lord presents the full effect of evil, and he becomes the slave of a citizen of that country, wretched, ruined, and abandoned, to share with the lowest what might meet the cravings of a wasted but insatiable appetite; "He would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him." For, while all may be spent in Satan's country, there is no giving there. The sense of want, according to nature, only drives to the wretched resources of nature, it may be the lowest, for supply. Utter degradation is the consequence, and no love is found there. It is the contrast of God's house and God's mercy. This describes the way in which the natural man, in feeling his want, turns to everything rather than to God, and thus becomes the slave of Satan in the lowest and most degraded lusts. Thus the way of the natural man, and the character of Satan's country—no man gave unto him—are brought fully out, not merely for Pharisees but for all.

Note, the life of nature spends itself, while the Divine life, having all fulness in the Lord, enriches itself in all and every its action.

The Lord then pursues all that characterises his return; he came to himself; he saw things as they really were. And what does this? Not merely a sense of misery, that may drive us to sin, but the introduction of the thought of God, of a true idea of God—God really known, and the whole state of misery consequent on departure from Him. There is always in the conversion and return of the soul, a thought not of the application of goodness to us, not of a salvation which assures our approach, not a knowledge of redemption, but of goodness in God, consequent blessing of all in His presence, and the folly of being absent. It is not the thought of mercy which can sanction evil, not the thought of possibility of, so to speak, negligent entry, not the Spirit of adoption on the other hand, but a necessity, whatever our place, of being with Him, and at the same time an entire confession of our unworthiness of being so. An attractive sense of goodness in Him, and humbling but not deterring sense of unworthiness in us, for it is associated with the sense of, imperative sense of need which has no resource but in that goodness. "I perish." So Peter, struck with the Lord's power, draws near and falls at His feet, but it is to say: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." "How many hired servants of my father abound in bread and I perish here with hunger!"

Note also here, what a glorious inconsistency this produces—a consciousness of the abounding faithfulness of the Father to a child, and use really of the language which belongs to a child—"The servants of my Father, and I!" A real, though not realized consciousness that he was a child, but not an idea, when he rendered reason to himself of his condition, of presenting himself as such, or owning

himself, or claiming a title of which he was utterly unworthy. A result of knowledge, true knowledge of, and honouring what God was, his Father was, but a sense of what he was in respect of that which implied the responsibility of a child, and knowledge of a child, and consequently the secret consciousness of being one, but not of one received by the manifested action of what the Father was and did towards him. But the ground of action is had, "I will arise and go"—impossible, with this knowledge, to remain there, for good was now known, not merely misery. Evil was now seen, not merely by the force of natural conscience even. It was sin against heaven and before his Father. It was sin viewed in relation with the position in which he viewed himself placed, being renewed in understanding and will. He was no more worthy to be called His son—true humiliation and intelligence as to that, but mixed with the thought that there was question of his worthiness to be it. No clear understanding of grace, and of its ways; consequently he demands that which was not in God's thoughts at all, to go halfway, and receive him, and make him a servant "as one of thy hired servants." Much more was due in justice strictly, and it in no way answered on the other hand to grace, for it did not satisfy, nor manifest it. But such is the ignorant heart of man, who confuses all, and ever is ready to act on its own thoughts, and make the Lord act on them, when it is drawn even into a (in some not a clear) sense of its misery. There is much instruction in this.

But the proposal in the heart of the young man was distinct. He felt he had forfeited all title to be son, wasted it wickedly, did not really see the extent of his guilt, nor

the extent and riches of Divine grace, though drawn by it, and, therefore, he proposes to be made as a hired servant. This is always the case. There is in this state a profound principle of moral rectitude, but entire ignorance of the ways and grace of the Father. But he rises and goes, for there is a principle of living activity. What follows is not the call of the sinner, but the reception by the Father, and His view of the matter—just compassion and tenderness—His heart was in the matter while the poor prodigal was far away yet occupied with his own thoughts, proposing to be servant, determined in grace, but humbled, perplexed, and degraded in his own eyes, though the thought of his Father's house and goodness, and his own need predominated. But, if there was doubt as to his reception in his heart, there was none in the Father's. A great way off He saw. Whose eye so quick as a Father's in love? And had compassion. No question here of dignity, of severity of judgment. He must relieve His own heart, full at the thought of His son returned, in shewing him love. He ran and fell on his neck. First, love to him in his wretched and ruined state, far from the servants, from all. He must encourage and restore a child's heart in shewing a Father's; thence it must flow. It became Him to be the Source and first in grace. Without reproach or enquiry, He, the Father, expresses what was in His heart—the more terribly he was lost, the greater the joy of the Father to receive him back. This passed entirely between the Father and the child. Then the affection can flow forth unhindered for restoring the soul. The son's mouth was opened for confession, but opened with a word which now had infinite power, for the expression of the Father's love came first, before a word of

confession—was not caused by it, but the expression of what was in His heart finding its joyful occasion in returning sorrow. "Father, I have sinned." The love made the confession much more, infinitely more profound, yet withal much more easy and sweet. It was no expression, remark farther, of suffering or of consequences, not concern for character, no excuse nor explanation. "Father, I have sinned": not before men—they were forgotten in the sense of the Father, for the sense of the sin brought into relationship with the Father, and that possessed his thought—"against heaven and before Thee." Far from the Father, the poor prodigal had well arranged his purpose to say: "Make me as one of thy hired servants," content to be in a lower place, as those under the law. But, come to the Father, these thoughts were impossible. It would have been to dishonour the expression of his Father's love; his tongue hung there suspended by the sense of a Father's love which embraced him. Could he say to a Father so loving: 'Set me far from you, do not make me a son in your love'? Impossible! It was not the time for such thoughts. Far from the Father we can reason so in our minds, but not when thus received and met by Him. Nor did the Father give him time, but, in lieu of setting him among mercenaries, all the servants of the house are called out to wait upon him.

The Father pursues the thoughts of his own heart, and stamps the character of its feeling on the thoughts and manners of all the house but one—the self-righteous Pharisee; his heart only felt no joy. For God, in His ways with the sinner, follows the ways and thoughts of His heart in grace and joy of love, not of the sinner's, even repentant, for he has

not reached, under the consciousness of his deserts, the thoughts and ways of God's heart in grace. The servants whom he would have been among were the servants and instruments of God's grace, and goodness, and bounty; he could not place himself among them as a mercenary. They are made to wait on this good pleasure of God's goodness. This presents, not the grace which seeks and supports, nor the diligence of the same love which sweeps and takes pains till it finds, but the reception of the sinner, not according to the thoughts even awakened in his heart when he comes to himself, but to those of the Father founded on His own joy. Next, we remark, this stamps its character and honour on the son. His shame and separation was not a matter unknown, but known as the occasion of the Father's joy on his return, and the Father goes out, first attaches all the honour of His acceptance and joy to him, and then brings him into the house, there to be esteemed according to the thoughts of Him whose favour was the glory and life of all in it. What grace in this way of procedure! First, we have between the Father and son himself these manifestations of affection and delight, which claim for themselves an interest which he alone who is the object of them can enter into. A stranger intermeddles not with the joy. This is the first way of God's love, and the heart restored to its place, and to the possibility of honour before others, because to Him whom it honours, but afterwards the full honour of a publicly honoured son is put upon him, every trace of the far country removed, in robes and signs of adoption which are found only in the Father's house. We know where that is found; he who knows it could be content with no other. Thus introduced, clothed in the

acceptance of Christ, festivity and joy filled the whole house (all but one heart) for He who led its joys, and gave tone to its pleasures, said: "This my son was dead, and is alive again, was lost and is found." Thus the joy of this principle of grace filled and characterized the house—the Father's grace.

"And they began to be merry." The sound of joy reached the elder son's ears. The natural conclusion would have been that in the Father's joy he should partake, and that if his Father was joyful some blessed thing must have happened. But there was NO real union or sympathy between his Father's heart and his. A selfish mind is not made for joy. The workings of grace are unintelligible to it. He enquires of a servant boy (παῖς) what made his Father's house happy, and he was informed—informed in terms which ought to have awakened every sympathy and every feeling. A double motive is presented—what he should have felt himself, and the Father's mind if that were his. "Thy brother is come, and thy Father hath killed the fatted calf, because He hath received him safe and sound." For the servant boy had caught, and in some measure entered into the joy of the house. "But he was angry and would not go in." A loss to himself only! The persevering grace of the Father is yet manifested. He goes out, and beseeches him. Wondrous and persevering mercy thus to reason with those condemning God's goodness, condemning for being good, and towards his brother! But in vain. All his reply is that the Father had never indulged his selfishness and inclination for having always served Him. He pleads his righteousness as a claim for God's honouring his selfishness, for indulgence of selfishness

is his sense of joy, and that in envious grudging at joy for his lost brother's return. But the Father, gracious as He was, did not relinquish His purpose of grace, nor His heart of love for the jealous ill-will of the elder brother's heart. He declares that all His life and house had been an exercise of abundant kindness towards the elder brother, and that it became, it was fitting. What grace in itself! What grace so to reason with such an one! But all is grace here. "It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this thy brother," thus shewing the motive for himself to be glad, and condemning his thoughts, "was dead and has come to life again, was lost and has been found." Such is the sentence of God upon the case. The application of the case of the elder brother to the Jews (as under the law) is evident. Hence all things were theirs, and they ever with Him.

Chapter XVI.

This parable addresses itself to the Lord's disciples. In the former, the Lord spoke to the Pharisees and Scribes. There, the reception of the sinner or Gentile in contrast with the Jew or self-righteous is stated, as dependent on the character and blessedness of God, for the Gospel rests on and always puts forward God. It is the great principle of it, whether as to character or dispensation. Here, the Lord explains to His disciples the position of man, and consequently Israel, man entrusted before God as such, or who held, in responsibility laid on him, this place. Man who really had ceased entirely to be the steward of God,

and who wasted rather the substance once entrusted to him so blessedly and confidentially, below all put in his hands as lord, as if it was his own, was again as on trial, and specifically for the manifestation of these things, set in this place in the Jews, the earthly blessings and privileges freely and fully conferred upon him on the responsibility of being faithful. And now it was reported of them (and oh, how true the report! Jesus would not willingly have borne it against beloved Jerusalem) that they had been unfaithful, that they had wasted the Lord's goods, and after the fullest trial man must be treated after the kindest and now repeated, repeated with the utmost care to instruct him in his duty, as a steward through proved unfaithfulness out of place. The goods of nature are in his hand, but he has lost his title really to distribute them. But they are in his hand, and the Lord instructs, the Christian may use them so as to turn them to real account. The steward made friends of his Lord's debtors with the goods, and authority *de facto* that he possessed. We also, the goods being thus left, though our authority is gone, have to use them to make friends that we may be received into everlasting habitations. It is the lowest transition point of service; the things are of the old man; the principle of using them of the new, and of the Lord. The men of this world are wise in their generation. The Lord gives us—it is a great grace—permission to turn this mammon of unrighteousness to good service according to His will—this, which has the stamp of evil and of the world upon it, to a purpose in which His favour is manifested, those He loves even consoled, excellent affections exercised, and thus His name honoured, and acceptable service done, and we make gain through that

which is acceptable to Him, friends according to Him with this evil thing. It is indeed a great grace to introduce such a thing into His kingdom, and turn the evil, or what represented it, round to good ; but so the Lord has ordered it.

Our use of present things is always unrighteous, for we have lost our title. These riches represent now the alienation of the world from God, and the setting up, and realisation of self and its enjoyments instead of God. But the Lord turns it round to good. Our natural character is unrighteous stewards of unrighteous mammon. But it becomes thus a matter of faithfulness so to use it, for spent on self it resumes its natural character of the expression and representation of selfishness. On the other hand, this use is a test of faithfulness, and he who is faithful in the least is faithful also in much ; and he who has used or given this according to the mind of God, thus setting up God, and down self, God will entrust him on the same principle with more important, even the true riches, for there has been faithfulness to God, and forgetfulness of self, which is the principle on which God can give, and on which alone we can use these true riches, our own proper riches as new creatures. On the one hand it is righteousness, on the other a real test of what hold the authority and excellency of God has on our mind. Besides, this object really becomes our master ; in truth Satan governs by it. What governs our heart, our object, is our master, and the love of money thus rules, and God is not sound according to our natural character. This will manifest itself in loving one and hating the other, or at least cleaving to one and despising the other. These two forms of attachment are given, because the subtle and deceitful heart

might plead against one form. But so it is—we cannot in effect serve God and mammon.

—14. The Pharisees, in rejecting the Lord's doctrine, proved its truth. They cleaved to money and despised the Lord; they could not serve both. The Lord declares the judgment of God upon them, which indeed is needful where there is much influence, and that unholy. They justified themselves before men—easy when they suited to themselves, really to the same principles, and gave the credit of religion withal. But God knew their hearts, for what is exalted among men is nothing but an idolatrous abomination before God.

The Lord then pursues the instruction as to the change of economy, or however the passing away of all they rested in, and the enforcement doubly of what they violated, and the coming in withal of the energy of faith. This change, in general, the Lord states in verse 16; a terrible word for the Pharisees! They were left altogether out, and behind. The Law and the Prophets were until John. A Law given to a people already such, and the Prophets recalling a people, owned as such, back to the Law. John closed this scene, and now a Kingdom was set up whereinto entry was to be made by the energy of individual faith, and thus the door opened to all who of God had it. This changed all. It was not Law nor Prophets, but God's Kingdom announced to all who had faith to enter in, those who clung to the flesh and self were left behind, acceptable perhaps to men, but left and deserted by the Lord in His Kingdom. The testimony of Malachi, which shall have its full force before the second coming of the Lord, is evidently distinct from this. The great and terrible day of the Lord was not

in question in the gracious presence of Christ in the flesh, except as the result of His rejection. But now the Kingdom of God is preached, even on His rejection, for every man to press into it. The difference is manifest. It was not however to set aside or enfeeble the Law that the Lord Jesus came. The Law, and the Prophets which recalled to it, were until John. But while He enforced its holiness, He suffered its malediction, or accomplished its ceremonies, did anything but set it aside. In its moral power it became (through our sin) a curse to us; He bore it. In its prefigurative ceremonies its value was purely what Jesus was, and He accomplished it; and even what was admitted in it, because of the hardness of their hearts, was now to revert to its original character. In the purpose and mind of God, "In the beginning it was not so." And the Lord hated putting away; now, it was condemned as sin. Further its supposed benedictions, as the flesh enjoyed them, were all set on their true footing, and judged by the revelation of another state, and world. But while the passage following judges entirely the view the flesh took of the earthly blessings, really attached to the old covenant and Israelitish faithfulness, and threw the light of another world (always true) on the circumstances of this, and in doing so necessarily changes the sanctions and principles, so as to bring in a Kingdom which admits all who believe, and are renewed in Spirit to receive heavenly things, and thus lift up the Kingdom into heaven, it yet justifies the whole mind and goodness of God, all His part and way in the economy, the Law and the Prophets, so much so that if Israel did not receive and be converted by them, it was useless to present to them a risen Messiah. The Lord might at once pass

into the heavenly Kingdom, and grace to all through faith. The circumstances of the history shew evidently its bearing on the elements of the Jewish position, and also their fallen state on which the word did not act.

—20. Lazarus is probably named to mark the interest which the Lord took. Poor and utterly despised, he was known by name before God. The rich man, known and waited on, was known only by his character; he was rich, and what was that before God? Luxurious, and that shewed a heart alienated from Him. He had his "good things" in his life here below, and thus he was characterized. In the same manner Angels wait upon the poor man. The rich man is buried far from Abraham; and here the circumstances are purely Jewish. He lifts up his eyes in Hades in torments. Lazarus is in the bosom of Abraham, the highest place of honour for a Jew. Hence it is also that the rich man says: "Father Abraham." It is addressed to Jews and covetous Pharisees, to explain the judgment of their evil, and the entire change which took place on their judgment, introducing the results of another world. The rich man had had his "good things" in this. The portion in the other world was a final one; they could not there change their position, or find assuagement. And, moreover, the resurrection (even of Christ) from the dead would not change when there was incredulity as to the Law and the Prophets. They, the Pharisees, were condemned by the word of their own Law and Prophets; they repented not at their call, and Jesus risen would not be sent to them. Nationally they were condemned on their own ground, the ground too they chose in pride—ground of God's righteousness withal. The Prophets spake in grace, for it

was to recall the wandering. Thus, while every principle of external sanction (so long abused as a system addressed to the flesh, and abused by the flesh) was changed, all that was passed as a testimony was validated in the highest degree, and given the fullest authority to. The house of His Father was in fact the Jewish people in their carnal glory, and on these the passage pronounces a full judgment.

Chapter XVII.

The great principle which now set aside the Jewish economy which had not recognized its Messiah, the Son of God, and introduced Eternal Life, was plain enough, but in the breaking down of what sustained the flesh, and was adapted to the flesh, and the introduction of what rested on the Spirit, and on a faith which never recognized the flesh, and which knows no present support, but rests on God only, and the flesh of course in a position such as this feels all to be against it—it which needs support—offences would come. This was for the disciples. The world to come was let in upon the conduct and faith of the disciples in this, and no man could serve two masters. But among those who made profession to follow Christ and His glory, on the principles of faith, alas! there would be many scandals. It is not in a reign of power when He will gather out of His Kingdom all scandals, and them which do iniquity. Satan's power is permitted. The exercise of faith is permitted—a time of trial, and of the proving, by the prevalence of evil, of what lasts because of God. As

the Apostle, speaking of the full dispensation of the Spirit: "There must needs be heresies that they which are approved may be made manifest." Offences must come. Grace and truth present the perfect simplicity of the service and walk which belongs to the Kingdom, which grace and truth have revealed, and into which grace and truth introduce us. But they have introduced it as truth into a world of evil where the flesh, its race, and its reasonings, and its falsehood are in the scene of their natural development, and where Satan is prince to introduce the evil with a subtlety of which the flesh suspects nothing at all, and into which, when not walking in the Spirit, we fall without hindrance, when the Lord of the vineyard permits this exercise. Thus the Lord permits and uses it for a chastening. They are however stumbling-blocks of the enemy, and "Woe unto him by whom they come;" he is really an instrument of Satan. And the Lord loves His little ones. "It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones," despised of men but treasured of God. The Church has to be guarded from these things in the midst of all.

The Saviour proceeds to apply the principle, or to shew how the saints should act, seeing that the flesh in them may give occasion to these things, they not being really slaves of Satan in their will, but the flesh is always slave of Satan, and acts in his sense. "Take heed," therefore adds the Lord, "to yourselves," both as to not giving occasion of stumbling (see Rom. xiv, especially verse 13, but the whole chapter) and besides not to stumble when the occasion is presented, keeping his soul in patience and in communion. "Take

heed to yourselves," is the great command as to the danger, and the offences in the liability of which we all stand in Satan's kingdom of this world as regards others' forgiveness, "Take heed to yourselves," jealous and judging yourselves. But, on the other hand, "If he trespass against thee, rebuke him; tell him his fault, and if he repent forgive him" ever so often. Keep the body sound in the presence of the enemy. It is the energy of the unity and holiness of the body which is the realization of the energy of the Spirit, unbroken in the land of faith. Watch incessantly yourselves, and that the Spirit of love, the power of unity, and the bond of perfectness be not broken, so that the enemy can enter, nor of holiness so that the peace may not be false, nor any grudge or ill-feeling remain in your own heart, but that all may be unfeignedly smooth and in energy. Tell your neighbour his fault; do not keep it for his sake and for yours; and if he confess, if he turn and repent of it, the heart is gained, the enemy driven out. He honours the Lord and the truth. That will be your object in charity, acting according to the love of God into which you have been introduced in this new kingdom by the rejection of the Son of Man, and forgive him, and so will be unassailable by the enemy either in conscience or in grace, Blessed path! What condescension to the weakness and evil in the introduction of the perfectness of what is good!

On the other hand, in such a position there would be need of faith and great energy. The disciples, under the direction of God, in their minds led perhaps by a petty part of the difficulty as of always forgiving, and a confused sense of the new position the Lord was placing them in, pray for

an increase of faith. The Lord replies as to the fulness of its energy, because faith realizes a power which is not in the person when it is realized, and thus acts without limit. The Lord applies it also, though in general terms, to the removing of the obstacle of a system which presented the form of good but was fruitless. When God is honoured, He displays, in a certain sense necessarily, His power—they sent into the position in which the exercise of that power glorifies Him. This is the principle of it all, indeed to act otherwise was what Satan tempted in vain the Lord to. Yet the great principle remains true, that in all need we may draw upon God. All consists in looking simply to Him. All things are possible to him that believeth, for it is God accomplishing His will, and He has willed to accomplish it by Man, and to honour Man, and Himself in Man, where He by and in man has been dishonoured by Satan. But this in faith according to His will till the Lord Jesus returns in power. Thus all the energy for the glorifying of the Lord was given them. If they had not the faith to place them in the position in which power would be glorified, they were not in the need which called forth the exercise of the power, and it could not be in exercise on God by the Holy Ghost, for this is the Holy Ghost's mind in the circumstances where the Church is placed. It is all-powerful and yet perfectly measured here, for faith puts all in its place (morally and) in power, for it brings God in according to the energy which has let in the world to come, the world of His truth and power into this, in the midst of those who are of Him, through the rejection of Him through whom the world is judged here, and we are admitted into it there. God acts in this, but in us in the midst of the weakness.

Faith thus is mighty and perfect always, but never carries, nor can, beyond duty, and therefore never exalts nor displaces the relationship of responsibility and obedience. How blessed, perfect, ordered, and powerful are God's ways! What energy it gives to man in making God so much to him as to make nothing of him, so that he has no need of others, though servant by it of all in God's behalf! The Lord make us thus wait on Him in simplicity, because as seeing Him. It is of energy to remove everything by which Satan can deceive man, and thus withal only enter into the simple-hearted happy position, loving position of unhindered obedience. Lord, make us thus to realize His grace, and presence, and power, in mercy in the secret of Thy will!

We have, in the history which follows, a singular concatenation of facts—a faith, operating of God, or rather operated of God in the heart, sets free from all the subsidiary forces which God had thrown round His will in the economy part, and the principle, which recognized God in Jesus, carries us by this recognition beyond the law of a carnal commandment, associating us with Him in whom is the power of an endless life, which occupying us with His Person who is above, and the power of all these things, plants us not in dishonour of the Law past, but in the liberty of the Saviour present. In this sense, by virtue of His presence, who once gave, and then fulfilled it, and bore its curse against us, in forgetfulness of it sealed by this word to him who recognized God in this: "Go thy way, thy faith hath saved thee." The word of Jesus was a word of Divine power. He who healed lepers under the Law (and it was a remarkable type) was He who gave the Law. But here Jesus came as a Servant, and

submits Himself entirely to the subsisting ordinances, and to their obligation to them in the act which expressed the Divine power towards them: "Go, shew thyself to the priest" was a word which at once recognized the law, and manifested the Jehovah that gave it. The ten received the benefit; they acted on the word of Jesus, and so, thus far, in faith. The one perceived and recognized the glory of God in it. Less preoccupied with the form and power of institutions, he returns to the Source instead of merely enjoying the benefit, for the flesh uses institutions to hide God. Evil had levelled the Jew and the Samaritan, alike cast out of the presence of Divine communion by the leprosy, the evil which afflicted them. They had a common lot by sin. Misery and equal exclusion had merged the difference, and made them fellows. The Lord here below, however, recognizes the authority of the Divine ordinances, makes Himself a Servant, yet therein to faith really, as we have seen, presents Himself as Jehovah. But the gratitude of faith was a readier reasoner than the instruction of the Law, and the blessing afforded by the presence and work of Jesus was, to one the aliment of Jewish distinction, to the other the evidence and comfort of Divine presence and goodness. To him, therefore, there was complete deliverance, for he was by faith arrived in grace at the Source from which the Law itself proceeded, and was let go in peace, saved by faith, simply, blessedly, and freely, having liberty from God and with God, and in the presence of God Himself with thanksgiving. It is a sad stupidity of the flesh to be put by mercy under the Law.

Note, as the Lord had not yet declared and manifested His glory outwardly, and put an end to the economy, but

that it only broke through, in the power in blessing of His acts, He sends the Samaritan, obedient and subject to God, instead of in pride of rebellion as the Samaritans were really, to the priests, so that indeed there was a ready and holy obedience here to the will of Jesus, to God; for the conviction of sin produces obedience, and is the root of it. The Lord sustains this, for it was yet God's way; salvation was of the Jews. The Samaritan, united, as we have seen, by his evil state with the outcasts by the Law, is ready at Jesus' word, of which they claimed help, to go and submit to the priests, God's ordinance therefore, but which supposed entire conviction of the power of His word, for it was the clean who had to present themselves. Thus full subjection is produced. But finding himself cleansed, he returns back to the Source, glorifying God and thanking Jesus. He was a Samaritan, by the knowledge of the Lord above and beyond the Law, cleansed, comforted, and free, by the knowledge of Jesus. He was not sent to the priests then. Faith had transpierced the veil, and rested on Jesus. One word stated his case: "Thy faith hath saved thee." He was a stranger in the house of God, admitted, as knowing the Master, with Jesus Himself. He was beyond the Temple, and with One greater than it—no need to send him back to it. The rest went their way, cleansed, to be under the Law, and left, in their stupidity, the Jesus that had blessed them. They did not return to glorify God, their heart was stupified by Judaism. This, at the point where we are now arrived of this Evangel, is an instruction full of importance and clearness. It was another light thrown on the passing away of the Law and that dispensation. The power was amongst them, though

unrecognized, on which hung all, and which, being rejected, removed them from their place in recognizing the sanctity withal of all that itself had instituted, and that too in faithful obedience as a Servant. This question was actually raised, *i.e.* of the presence of the Kingdom of God, and the Spirit of God presents it to us here in this question of the Pharisees. And there is a remarkable instance of the distinction of responsibility, and the revelation of the secret of His will and power, before the accomplishment of which suffering goes necessarily, the world having rejected Jesus who was in it, the ground of this responsibility.

How many reasons might have been pleaded for going on! How might the nicer Jews have said: 'You are ordered to go to the priest.' But faith goes right to the heart of God. The sense of grace, producing thankfulness, goes at once to the source and fountain of grace, and there finds all grace, and a dismissal in the perfect liberty of grace, because there is nothing else than that, returning to Jesus with thanks. The Law and all was left behind, for Jesus must be what Jesus was. He had found the power of God. He glorified God, and was passed into another system by faith, as ever where God was in grace, faith having in its simplicity recognised goodness in the Source and Author of it. But it was really He who had given the Law, but now stood to faith in quite another and separate relation—that of grace, and there he was necessarily placed, for thanks to the Author carried him to Jesus, and that was what He was—He could not deny Himself, He was come, on the contrary, for this, despise Him how might the Jews. He recognised God as God really was—good, and was necessarily placed on this footing,

and to eternity would have found Him nothing else. "Go in peace," says the Saviour, "thy faith hath saved." No question of going to priests now, and this bondage. He was come to Jesus, glorified God in principle, understood God, and God was that to him. So the poor Syrophenician woman; dog she might be, but God was good—good to dogs, they eat the crumbs. Humbleness which bows as worthless to all His ways, and therefore finds all His goodness. It is a great point always to be kept in this littleness, that we may always enjoy this fulness of love, and understand it, for grace, and knowledge, and all outward experience, and action in the Church, even faithful service by the Spirit externally, all but communion destroy, *i.e.* tend to destroy it. Communion and the presence of Jesus always keep us little, and happy in the fulness of God. Blessed for ever be His Name and glory!

Remark too that this man glorified God. It is this way alone that glorifies God, though men may plead in form the commandments of the Law, and the precepts of Jesus. He who owns His goodness most fully, necessarily does, and finds liberty and the joy of God. "Not only so, but we joy in God through Jesus, by whom we have received" (not the Law, but) "the reconciliation." And they who believe are reconciled. The great secret is to present Jesus, and we have all—Him and all that God is in Him, and the Father to Him for us.

—20. The Pharisees asked the Lord when the Kingdom of God should come. The Lord places them on their then plain responsibility. "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation." It is not the coming of a magnificent ceremony to you His people owned and accepted, honoured

as those who are to be the subjects (objects) of it. Neither shall they say, "Lo here, or Lo there" (the enemy would well say it, when the King was far, to deceive, when they had rejected Him, or, on the other hand, to dazzle and bewilder them, so that they should fall into the hands of Antichrist), but it should not be so said of the Kingdom really as presented to the nation. It WAS presented, for the Kingdom of God was then there amongst them. Jesus the King was speaking to them. Ought they not to have known Him? Because He came in grace, was that a reason for not knowing Him—for nothing in the heart of man? Because He had humbled Himself that He might know their sorrows, was that a reason for not discerning His greatness manifested in ten thousand ways, and above all in His infinite condescension, the perfection of His moral ways? His holy grace to the poor and guilty proved plain enough who was there, if the heart of man had not been opposed to all that was worth the delight of God in the Kingdom, if it had not been blind and incapable to all that was lovely and of good report, and that in power in what He did. For the lowlier he was, the more wonderful His works. To His disciples He had other things to tell. They had received Him. He was rejected; leaving them, suffering and temptation would beset them, through the violence and the pretences of Satan, when they were thus left. Trying as their position was then, and rejected as He might be, the days would come when they would long for one of the days of the Son of Man, and would not see it. He speaks of Himself to them as Son of Man, not as one who brought in the Kingdom, for the secret of that glory was not yet brought out, as for them, but such as they had

had with Him, blessed and sweet intercourse in His walks through the world that knew Him not, with these, the companions (ignorant it might be) of His pilgrimage, but on whom He poured forth all His love, all He could of His heart, using them as His friends, telling them what He had in communion with His Father, as they were able in a world He loved, and had created, ignorant as it was of Him, in which He, even He, had so clothed the grass, sustained, consoled, if rejected of the world, the companions of the thoughts, and the kindness, which shut up by the rejection of the world, found its vent in a deeper love, marked and softened by sorrow, but which came therefore more sweet and touching to those on whom it could find vent. "Ye are they," said the weary but perfect Saviour, "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations, and I appoint you a Kingdom." Poor companions, yet comfort to the Saviour in this, that He could vent His holy sorrow, not indeed as though they were wise to receive it, but according to the estimate of His love towards them, and the place in which that love, the Divine knowledge of that love placed them (most sweet it was surely) does He now do this, trust us with his sorrow, yea, much more now that He is exalted, giving us by the Spirit a part in the sorrow and activity of His love. But as to all present circumstances, He now kept them in His Father's name. They would, as Jews in the Kingdom and in the Land, feel the difference. Then, though the Lord would not say it to the nation, and had not said it of the true Messiah, but had presented what He was, the Son of God and Son of Man to conscience, Satan would say to the disciples to allure and deceive them in that evil day:

"Lo here, and Lo there." They were not to go after, nor follow them. Israel was judged; there was no hope for the nation, and as the lightning flashed from heaven to heaven, so would the Son of Man be in His day. But first He was to suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation as Son of Man. That was a casualty, and necessary as Messiah. It was the total ruin of the whole nation as in themselves. When I say 'casualty,' I mean that He was nothing less Son of Man, though in another form, just accomplishing His work as such, but as to the link between Him as their Messiah in the flesh, it was broken and gone.

It is evident that while the Lord takes this name of Son of Man to His disciples, as revealing of this higher and wider truth, the whole of this is Jewish, and shall find its accomplishment properly in Jewish disciples in the latter day. The generation are left there, and will take their place in the Land again in the latter day, where alone they can properly be reckoned as such, and these circumstances arrive.

There are three great points presented. Jesus was to come in His day, and the subject here evidently is the Jews, the day of judgment of the dead. There is no question of "Lo here, and Lo there," and not to go after them. It is an earthly judgment acting on the circumstances in which they were placed, and Jewish distress, when the disciples would be in Jewish distress, and desire one of the days of the Son of Man. The Son of Man would be revealed in an unexpected moment, as the lightning, but first be rejected of the Jews and suffer. Verse 31 shews its clearly Jewish and local character. The unbelieving people would

continue in a state of carnal security, resting on the continuance of things as they were, *i.e.*, acting on it, for man does in the midst of many miseries. In the cases the Lord refers to, the judgment came on the earth, and those left were the spared ones. Thus should it be when the Son of Man was revealed.

Note, the judgment would fall specially on the city, for they were not to return into the house, and if in the field not to turn back. Yet the great object of the Lord is the character of the judgment, so as to separate the hearts of His disciples. When they ask therefore when, He replies, "Where the carcase is the eagles will be." Where the dead object of judgment is, there the judgment will be, swift, terrible, unlooked for, and certain. But there are some points here to be remarked. Suddenness of judgment is its general character. Israel, awful thought! would be in the case of Sodom, or of the world before the Flood. It is evident that they are temporal judgments on a temporal people, something which, though sudden and unexpected, gave opportunity to turn back from the field to the house. With the end of the world it has nothing to do. With the apparition of the Son of Man it has to do, but yet so associated with Jerusalem and the Land as to raise these questions dependent on wars, human attack or premonition. For the Lord Himself once come as lightning, if that were it, returning from the field would be ill in place. There are also human circumstances capable of acting on and leaving room for human motives and conduct, though the Lord be so there as to warn them against them. It was a case where no human motive was of avail, for the Lord was interfering in it. No time for concession, no time to

spare the life in fruitless concession to evil because judgment was as there. Faithfulness to the Lord and His testimony, who was at hand, was the real wisdom. He who saved his life would lose it, and he who lost it would really gain it. The Lord does not give the reason farther here than that His day was immediately in question in judgment, and that deceivers, and exceeding distress were then among a people, a generation who had rejected Him, and made Him suffer, and He was coming to judge. Besides, in the judgment, though man awake to the danger was to act with entire separation from the thought of this world, for human thoughts were vain when the Lord was judging like the suddenness of the lightning, there would be a perfect separation by the judgment. Their efforts to save life would be vain. How save it by joining or acquiescing in evil, when the Lord was coming to judge the evil? That was the thought which should possess them. But the Lord Himself, with discerning perfectness which knows all things, would spare in the same bed the faithful when the unfaithful was seized by the inevitable and sure judgment of God Himself. Although the testimony should act upon the conscience of man, the discernment of God was sure—in a bed, at the mill, one taken the other left, as we have said, where the corpse for judgment was, the judgment would be sure to come. Thus guarding against seductive spirits, a sudden station of the Lord in judgment was revealed to the disciples—a judgment which, like that of Noe and Sodom, would take the wicked and leave the just, would be a judgment on man here below, who looked no way for it. The righteous would be preserved. It would be sudden and terrible. The Son of Man in His day.

Chapter XVIII.

It is evident to me that the parable which follows applies itself to the faithful Remnant of the Jews in the latter day. The widow in that city in the presence of her adversary appears to have no refuge or answer in God Himself, for indeed waters of a full cup have to be wrung out to them. The cry of faith is forced from them by distress, long silent in them, in the patience and long-suffering of God. But in the midst of the trial and distress preceding the Lord's coming—of that day under the adversary, the Antichrist, when the throne of iniquity and oppression of God's name and people seems established for a law, this shall be the resource and character of the elect—they cry day and night. This is addressed to the disciples, even at this period viewed (*i.e.* before the resurrection) as Jews, Jewish disciples on the rejection of the Son of Man, liable to the consequences of Jewish infidelity till the Lord Himself appeared to take up the Remnant, and glorify Himself in His own strength. It is not "men ought always" (πρὸς τὸ δεῖν ἀνθρώπους). I do not say that we cannot apply a principle of God's conduct, but the subject is put as a principle "ought" (πρὸς τὸ δεῖν). The direct application here is to the circumstances of the Jews in the latter day—that poor widow and desolate. As the mammon of unrighteousness before, so the judge of unrighteousness now. Further, the elect among them are noticed. Surely God will do as much for His own elect, as the unjust judge for the helpless. As the Lord taught the disciples to give their life, sooner than save it, in such times (for indeed provision is made for that), so here He encourages them with the certainty of the

answer of God to the cry of His in that day of distress in speedy deliverance. Further, we have in fact their character and circumstances. They are in deep distress, entirely helpless, with an adversary who wrongs them sore. They cry day and night, though not in circumstances so accomplished. In spirit this should be our position, and the blessing would come for need and deliverance, for God, the God of faithfulness and grace, and of His people, is always the same. There is an adversary, but there is a cry He hears, and will certainly avenge. Thus shall it be with His beloved, and because beloved disciplined Remnant in that day; see Isaiah lxv., lxvi. "Night and day" the distress was urgent, and but One to help after all. Blessed position, though humbling!

But the Son of Man, when He comes, will He find faith on the earth? Alas! but little. But this passage applies to those days, to the time spoken of, and the expectation and confidence in His power who shall come when this evil and distress prevails. God will avenge speedily, but will man be found in faith? Will He find faith in the earth? It is a dark one, of the darkest shade, because applied to the elect cast on this time of trouble, and on man's heart. It is His coming to the earth, not to fetch the Church. All this shews clearly the application of the parable to the Jewish Remnant in the latter days. The faith here spoken of is a faith which attends deliverance, which reckons knowing the Eternal's love for Israel, on the deliverance of Messiah according to His word, and so by faith brings Him in, for the cry of faith is always heard. But the fidelity of the Lord is better than our faith, and thus the full needful exercise and purging

process is carried on, and He comes to bless when blessing comes aright, always perfect and good. "By this, therefore, shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin;" when the Lord shall have purged all the filth of the daughters of Zion with the Spirit of judgment, and the Spirit of burning; see also Isaiah lxiv. 7. The first part of the chapter is connected with the preceding. The Remnant would have to cry to God to deliver them from their adversary; perseverance in spite of all being against them, because they counted on God, shewing knowledge of Himself, and that He was the ground of their confidence. This real knowledge of God was the whole matter in such case, but would Christ find such faith when He came? *i.e.* faith reckoning on deliverance, whatever the condition. Still it is a general principle; men ought always to pray and not to faint.

The Lord having thus closed what related to the Kingdom at His coming, and on principles universally applicable, speaks of the spirit suited to the Kingdom now in connection with His rejection. The new thing morally as to what suited man's introduction to it, such as he was, the renewal of relationship between God and man. The humility connected with the sense of sin, and reference of heart to God. The humility connected with the sense of one's own nothingness, and confidence in God, not man pretending to be just with God, which was ignorance and pride, but God merciful (not indifferent) to man a sinner—the spirit of a child. The first Adam exalts, the Second humbles Himself. But there the root is reached. All human advantages are only hindrances, they nourish the old Adam. Who then can be saved? Impossible with man,

but all things are possible with God. Then the advantages of the Kingdom now and hereafter. And then the doctrine of the Cross closes and crowns the whole, the resurrection leading into the new scene and world.

—9. The Lord returns to the present character of the Kingdom, and in three points shews man's point of entrance in nothingness, emptiness of everything, a sinner to receive justification, a child to receive instruction, empty and poor to receive true heavenly and eternal riches, and that mere human righteousness, human wisdom or man's thoughts, human position and riches were just so many hindrances to the Kingdom of God. One must be despoiled of all really to enter there also may we say, though in a certain sense these things may be sanctified, as we have seen, chap. xvi. Yet so far as even in the Christian these things operate, they are so much that spoil the power and character of the Kingdom in us, and therefore of the Church also in the world. All these things partake of or lead to this character "trusted in themselves" (πεποιθότας ἐφ' ἑαυτοῖς), and therefore set aside the Holy Spirit, and by consequence the detection of the flesh, and all contrary to the power of the Kingdom in us. There is another effect or trait of this state, despising others—a state of sin most thoroughly sinful and opposed to all that God is in Himself, and all that we ought to be either by the Law or in grace before Him, for God is mighty, and despiseth not any. And He is love, and therefore regards specially the poor and needy, for He wants not anything, but loves others. But pride is always necessitous. What a contrast between this Pharisee, and Paul before Festus and Agrippa, even in the confidence that he has. There we find the poor prisoner full of

confidence, but what says he? "Would to God that all that hear me were altogether such as I am." It is not: "I thank Thee I am not as other men are,"—the pride which results from comparison with man, and is proud of the external difference, but which, having tasted the perfect grace of God towards himself, and being perfectly satisfied, and resting, and joying in, and blessing God for it, his soul filled therewith, with grace necessarily, by the abounding of this grace and love shed abroad in his soul by the Holy Ghost, can desire, in the unfeigned love of his heart, that all were only like himself possessed of the same knowledge and consciousness of the grace of God, the same riches of Christ as he the chief of sinners had and tasted. A sufferer and a prisoner, he longs for all to be with him, save his bonds, instead of standing alone, glad he is not as they. What a contrast! Contrast with the grace of God in man, in Jesus, in His servants, and with the God of grace. We find both in Jesus. He made Himself as others, as to their need, entering into their sorrows, sharing the effect of their sins. If He was separate from all sin in Himself, and the Holy One, He was the Holy One in love to sinners. Such is our position as co-workers with God.

In detail there is this to remark in the Pharisee, that he by no means in form attributed the good to himself. He recognized nominally God and God's goodness in it. His first thought apparently was God, and that with thanks, "God, I thank thee." But then it is, "God, I thank thee that I," not "O God, I thank thee that thou," &c. He compared himself with the rest of men, not with God. Avoiding outward crimes, and fulfilling outward ceremonies, he substituted for crimes pride, and hatred, and contempt,

the principles most opposed to God in Christ, and rested on a character before men instead of humbleness and conscience before God. The publican, on the contrary, knew God, imperfectly perhaps, but he knew Him and himself—a knowledge (which is everything) of which the Pharisee had nothing. It is the knowledge of God which really humbles. He who humbles himself shall be exalted, and he who exalts himself shall be abased. And how attractive this lowliness really is! It savours of the presence of God known and felt. The spirit of simplicity, docility, and nothingness, next the Lord notices as characterizing the Kingdom; he who does not receive it as a little child cannot enter therein. It is essential. Wisdom, learning, exalted circumstances, reputation, authority, all must bow and be absolutely laid low; none of them are in a little child. Of such is the Kingdom, and on no other ground can one enter.

—14. Note, righteousness by faith, or justification before God is not spoken of but by Paul, if we except the publican in this passage which is not really an exception. Then we get the counterpart, as is known, in James. We have often just, righteous practically or in character, and righteousness too.

—18. There must be renunciation of self in righteousness, of self in the powers, and faculties, and acquisitions of man, self characteristically, and of the world, self in our external relations, to enter the Kingdom. This is the case now put with everything naturally amiable and upright, but which only ministered to self, and hid the heart from itself, from the conscience, these screens that are between. For the effect of the operation of the Spirit of God, *quoad*

hoc, is to put everything that is in the heart into the conscience. The young man rested on the goodness of human nature. The Lord proves it bad, really bad and miserable, whatever the outward form of amiableness might be, and He lets the whole of this fully appear, as far as it could be under the Law, that the root of bitterness which this left there untouched, might be manifested notwithstanding. For we must stand in the truth before God. If grace came by Jesus Christ, so did truth. It might have been some Paul, if indeed it were not one yet more amiable and attractive in his natural character. These worldly advantages draw the most emphatic declaration of difficulty from the Saviour. The young man was attracted by the Saviour's character of wisdom, goodness, and power, specially goodness, for he seems to be singularly amiable, and says to Him: "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" One would say, good desires seeking in the best direction for direction in conduct which should be approved. But, alas! there was no link between God and the heart; it was entirely unbroken before Him, untouched, no light whatever. Approved conduct he desired, good authority to direct him in it, but though nominally according to God, the sanction and approbation of man and of self was at the bottom, though perhaps his state of ignorance hindered also this from resting on his conscience, though it is never really ignorant of what we do seek though quite of Him we ought. "There is none that understandeth." The principle of the young man's approach was very clear. Good disposition. Goodness in man capable on direction of doing that which led to Eternal Life. There all the fairest form of man's religion, when

even the Word of God is admitted as direction, begins, for by habit and education Christ's words are admitted as direction. But there is a principle essentially false, that there is any goodness in man at all. All religion begins with God in the discovery of man's state, that there is no good in him at all, but there is in God. Here the Lord meets him at once, as Nicodemus on a similar occasion. "Why dost thou call me good?" For He ranked Himself as in the mind of the young man here, to meet him where he was, under the Law, not as a Saviour but as a true Teacher. "There is none good but One, that is God." Blessed and perfect word! "Thou knowest the commandments," for they were hypothetically the rule of life to man in the flesh.

The Lord having giving him credit for what he had, now proceeds to let in, as we have seen in another case, the light of the Kingdom of Heaven upon his heart, the relinquishment, total relinquishment of this world as a good, which had now rejected Christ, and thus shewed itself incapable of moral good, the goodness of God. It was a different principle and line of goodness, not man but God. Not however till, by the presenting of Christ in every form, the goodness of God, they had proved there was no goodness, and no capacity for goodness in man. In this case, the possession of much that attached to this world was evidently a great hindrance, a vast, and, to man, insuperable impediment, for his heart was there. But if he reasoned, the heart of those who heard, who had so much opportunity of doing good, the disciples indeed, as to judgment (not by grace) they were where the young ruler was, could hardly enter into the Kingdom of God. Who is to be saved? No

one upon this ground. But what was impossible with men was possible with God. He only was good. Man's heart was elsewhere, but He who was good could save, and give new life. The hearers use the word "save," for there is always a vague consciousness of something wrong when we seek eternal life, but the natural heart always confounds it all together, and begins its religion from itself where God is not, and therefore ends it with itself also, using it to exclude God more effectually by pride and self-complacency.

Grace was the only resource, and Divine power. It was well proved in the presenting of Jesus. Then, on the other hand, the question arose of the consequence of acting on this word. Abstractedly, perhaps, man might say the love of Christ is the sufficient motive. It is the only motive. It constrains. It Divinely constrained Christ to come down and seek us here. But this love plunges us in not only sacrifices, but trials and difficulties, dangers and opposition, and, when we have left all, the Lord proposes a glorious reward to encourage, support, and animate us. It was the same with Him. Love, love to us, miserable sinners, and the accomplishment of the Divine good pleasure brought Him down, but for the joy that was set before Him, He endured the Cross, despising the shame. Moses also endured, having respect to the recompense of the reward. If I say: 'I will go there for the reward,' there is no grace, no love of God working in us, no participation in Divine nature, but He who knows us and was one of us, gives the exceeding great recompense of reward, and assures the heart of him who sees the sacrifice in his way of self-denial. It is: "We have left all," which is the ground of the enquiry. They had left all through love to Jesus, and in obedience

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to His call, and now, when all was smitten from under them in the world, when enquired of thus, all, and all dignity, and all honour in the world entirely swept away, then the Lord presents another and a surer hope, a portion with Him, indeed here in rejection, but a portion with Him also in the glory which was His. Second Adam in another world in the age to come—the great hope into which the rejection of Jesus by the counsels of God set those who had a portion with Him. They are left on account of the Kingdom of God. The Lord enlarges the thought in His humble and holy grace. It was everything to leave all for Him, but the Spring, and Centre, and Source of the whole Kingdom of God was there, and puts this in grace before the disciples in truth; though the spring and seed of life was in them, it was mixed with many carnal thoughts, affection for Him, very little enlightened. Peter casts it as a sort of responsibility on Christ. "We have left all for Thee, what shall we have?" There was an ugly spirit mixed with the question. They had done a great deal for Him; what were they to get? The Lord's answer enlarges infinitely the sphere of grace in them, and corrects the carnality that attached itself to it by the same word. It was not for an individual who held out great hopes, not for personal affection, or excitement disguised under the name of Messiah, but the moral power of truth in the soul. They had left it for the Kingdom of God. This gave the real scope for what was true (Jesus hiding Himself) and corrected and made naught what was carnal. At the same time this expression makes it good for all who, in thankfulness of heart, leave all for the Kingdom of God. In their after times it was not following Jesus in Person,

though that was clearly the proof of it then, but leaving all for the Kingdom of God, which the Lord owns. That can be done now through grace. Having thus presented the blessed and glorious consequences of giving up all for Christ, so that they should understand the end of these things, the Lord presents to them the extent of the position in which they were placed in following Him, what should happen to Himself, and how the introduction into this new world of blessing had its accomplishment by (death and) resurrection. But they understood it not, and the saying was hid from them.

Now the Lord, going up to Jerusalem, follows His career as Messiah, Son of David, presenting Himself as such to the people of the Jews. He was nigh Jericho, that ancient place of Israel's entry, but sign also of Israel's sin. There sat a blind man begging. Hearing the multitude, who tell him it is Jesus of Nazareth, he founds his cry on the title "Son of David," recognizes His Jewish royal title. Jesus stood, as he persevered when rebuked, thus exercised in faith, and commanded him to be brought. Owning His title thus going up to the royal city, He will do all demanded of Him in this title. For from this out He presents Himself such, but it is however the LORD Himself who presents Himself as Son of David here. And in all these latter interviews I see these two characters united. In truth, the whole power of the counsel of God, and the wondrous blessedness of the presentation of Jesus by Himself to the Jews, which yet occasioned the scandal, was that, that it was the Jehovah of the old Testament, He who had led them by Moses, He who had guided and conducted them all the way with His glorious arm, who now presented

Himself as their lowly because Saviour King—their King in grace. For at verse 35, there is a very formal division of the subject of the Gospel.

—35. Chap. xix. should begin here. This is His present presentation to Jerusalem, in view of the Kingdom; He is going up there. The character and ways of the Kingdom morally, the principles for men, sinners, Jews viewed in their need as sinners, or Gentiles, of service above economy because flowing from the character of God, accomplished in Christ—this rejected by the world, and indeed the opposition of the world to the revelation of the character of God morally in Christ. These great and fundamental truths had been presented, and the Lord now returns to His actual personal mission, the great result of which was to be accomplished economically by the relation in which He stood with the Jews. Here, therefore, with the *cortège* of Israel, the multitude, He begins His entry by Jericho to visit His royal city, the city of His love, where He had placed His name of old, and that He visited now. He deals now with Israel, but with Israel according to His own character in judgment and in grace respectively. Here the blind in their necessity have more intelligence than the guides of Israel, and cry out, herald through their need of His power, "Son of David have mercy upon me." Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of David to him, for He was come that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind. Need, personal need made him persevering, and the Son of David was come for the need of Israel. And though a troublesome interruption to the crowd, to this poor beggar, and little assorted to their ideas of the Son of David, the Son of David in mercy gave all

heed, as indeed it was in His heart and His blessed glory to do—the Jehovah, Saviour and Companion of the distress of His people; for our poverty also is the herald of His grace, and seizes it through grace in its true character, for thus it was at this moment with this poor man. Thus announced, the Lord stops, and while the Servant of his poverty and distress which, through faith, found its resource in the riches of Christ, He, who was owned as David's Son, shews Himself the Jehovah-Saviour of Israel to do what the poor man would. It was in His power to do it, and willing to answer even the need of faith. Picture of Israel! his need was to see; he saw and glorified God, as all the people, when they saw it, "gave praise unto God."

Chapter XIX.

Thus introduced in His character (the Lord that healed and gave sight to Israel in its need) the Son of David, Jesus pursues His way. This was a herald act; it therefore precedes Jericho here, it being said merely: "When He drew near to" it. And He entered and passed through Jericho to have the facts according to their moral order, as we have seen universally in Luke, not their chronological.

—1, 2. These are not historically subsequent, but having given a fact morally antecedent in character, the Gospel proceeds with the succession of events consequent on this character of Jesus. From this out, He acts royally, explains that He was to go, and receive the Kingdom, leaving His servants to trade, but in a dignity which might

command indeed, but which did not require the reception or the acceptance of man. Zaccheus stood in circumstances most unfavourable—a publican and rich. But the Lord, as King, chooses where He will go, whom He will favour, always indeed as the moral Servant of the Father, but as King in Israel who brings salvation by His royal presence, and honours in his house, as the true Restorer, a publican if He sees good, being a son of Abraham. All was in disorder, but His good pleasure set in its perfection, acting from itself, all things right. In Jericho the accursed, but the entry of Israel, He chooses a publican, to go and dine there uninvited. He acts as King, and brings salvation to the house, but Israel was all in disorder. Zaccheus pleads his full action on the righteous principle of Israel—he restored fourfold, gave the half of his goods to the poor. It was all well, in a sense, a good feeling that is, he desired the approbation of Jesus, and Jesus having gone there, Zaccheus, really good and just in his conduct, would cover his shameful position as a Jew in society by his ways. It was a great mixture, but the Lord puts it all out of place, the bad and the good together, saying: "This day is salvation come to this house." The grace of God brings salvation. Conscience was awake, many fruits followed; he desired to see Jesus, what and who He was. But he was placed all wrong. Neither were of importance. When salvation comes, it brings its wealth, and its all, and sets aside the goodness and the wrong position alike, by the one word of what it is. It brings, and not finds what it seeks. Zaccheus was despised of the Jews, and the readier therefore to receive Jesus. It is always good for us to be despised humanly. The Lord knew him, His poor

wandering sheep, by name, goes to him in this despised state, a publican and a sinner, and brings him salvation. The multitude thought a prophet ought to preserve his character. But the Son of David, the Lord, had no need of character from the world; He had His own, and He showed it in this, for He acts in perfect grace and condescension, but as the Lord in royalty. Still as in reference to Jews, he was a son of Abraham, owning, clinging to, they were His gift to His Beloved, their privileges, but never losing this character of grace (but His life, because He held fast these two things together) the Son of man is come to seek and to save what was lost. Royal grace and human service found their place together. And as the blind man had heralded Him Son of David, He makes Himself a Servant, but in the lordship and power of grace. But grace thus presented, or the highest privilege presented in grace, puts under the extremest responsibility to it in grace, a last resource; and this was Israel's case now. But the Lord fully knew all the result, and before presenting Himself as Messiah, Son of David, come in the Name of the Lord, gives an account of how in a higher way that it might be heavenly, and of the Father, He would receive the Kingdom, and what would be the lot, whether of the servants to whom He trusted His goods in His absence, or His enemies who refused to have Him for their King. And, having thus let in the scene of His rejection, shewn it was in no uncertain spirit, but the spirit of knowledge as of grace, and of full warning to them to whom He went, He proceeds to make His royal entry into Jerusalem, that the unhappy city might come under the full guilt of having rejected their King.

—7, 8. I cannot help considering this as presenting the Lord's view and judgment of one esteemed by the world evil, and presenting an example on the highest authority of one who in secret and in unfavourable circumstances was under holy influences, and seeking right, without Gospel revelation, who came to the light that his deeds might be made manifest that they were wrought in God, who, seeking to walk acceptably, was rejoiced to receive One whom he supposed and who appeared to be of God, and the Light of the world, and opened out all his ways to him, desirous to approve himself to Him, and have His judgment. A holy purpose! He was however, as is manifest, short of salvation. Observe then that our Lord, without reproving his account of himself, for it was not cold self-righteousness, and it was before others, gives him the true consolation and comfort, declaring that salvation was come to his house that day, putting him therefore on the only true ground of acceptance. He is silent as to what he had done, but gives him full assurance, and declares the acceptance of his person as a son of Abraham, and so manifested and acknowledged by Him to them all. And hence the change of αὐτὸς (he). When speaking of salvation, He addresses Himself to Zaccheus, and in speaking to him is silent as to claim or worth, stating salvation to be come to him then, and indeed to one lost. In addressing them, He owns him fully in the character of highest worth in their eyes, and his genuine excellence. The same was our Lord's way with the woman in Simon's house. He draws out the features of internal excellence in the sinner—there, no doubt, by grace—to the shame of the self-righteous, and throwing the robe of His comforting favour and acceptance

in the presence of others over the shame of their nakedness, as it were, of character, while not concealing that they are lost and sinful, He does it, but as the sphere of exercise of His own inimitable, considerate love.

Here we have an interesting and new exhibition of character, and our Lord's judgment on it. That He knew what was in Zaccheus is evident, and called him from this knowledge, for the shewing forth the Divine glory, wisdom, and compassion, for our instruction and knowledge of His ways, as for the blessing of poor Zaccheus, cannot be doubted. How calculated too was His conduct to meet the anxieties, and draw out the confidence of Zaccheus! How full of grace in itself! How prompt to the secret workings of his mind, known better as to what they were than by himself, and calculated to put down with authority the pride of the others, and to exhibit the work of God in himself in its true and genuine character. The expression "stood" (σταθεὶς) shews the anxiety of Zaccheus, and his absorption into his own enquiries, and his full idea that Jesus could solve them, which He did with the perfect wisdom we have seen, as if He had said: 'Be at peace, see here salvation.' Perhaps "stood" means "standing up." I think if it had been a new resolve it would have been unbecoming, and the Lord's answer seems to be a sort of return for it.

—11. Their thoughts were fixed on an earthly and present kingdom. The Lord reveals it heavenly as flowing from the Father, and an interval of responsibility of service, meanwhile, until He returned in the power of it. For the expectation was rife of this kingdom, and the Lord had acted on this thought, increasing its force and weight. In

the thoughts, evidently there was something extraordinary in His presence, and power, and ways. Jerusalem was the centre to them of this thought naturally, and justly in a certain sense. It was the city of the great King. The Lord therefore explains the heavenly nature and character of His Kingdom, for, in the rejection of Messiah, the Lord had provided for the introduction of better, higher, and heavenly things, holy things which presented His Divine nature, and communion with it directly. For the veil thereof was to be rent, but at the same time not as though He took the Kingdom, *i.e.*, exercised it while far off. He was to receive it and return. Also the Kingdom which Jesus takes, and thus exercises, He does as Servant, at least as received as Man, however Divine glory may be discovered by the Father having given all things into His hand, and His coming from God, and going to God. In the fulness of the character of these things, in itself revealed by the admission of man, the veil rent within, yet *quâ* Kingdom He receives it and exercises it as God and King, as having it as Man under Him, that God may rule by Him. Jehovah has put all things under His feet. Yet God has provided in the intermediate dispensation by the Cross, for the full revelation of what He is, that we may go to the Source, and morally enjoy it.

—13. Here we have the disciples then sent of Jesus after His death.

—14. Evidently here the Jews, His countrymen. It is said that they sent a message after Him, because He had not taken the kingdom here. But He having gone, and sent the Holy Ghost, who proposed His return, on their owning Him, in the Kingdom and glory, they refuse this

message of the Spirit, and after His departure declare that they will not have Him, send, as it were, a message to insult God in the rejection of His Son. These therefore were gone all wrong. But the servants also were placed under responsibility; they were set to serve. And here it is specially responsibility and fidelity. It is not, as in Matthew, difference of gifts, and that according to the vessel too, prepared, shewing the administration of God, and the grace of His wisdom. A grace which, understood, was the cause (source) of action, but a common responsibility. And that suffers in the smallest thing which may concern the Lord, and a reward proportioned to the faithfulness, I say not 'merited by', for the faithfulness itself even is by grace, and the reward is of grace beyond all possible proportion with the work.

—17. Ἐν ἐλαχίστῳ (in the least). But the rewards proportioned *inter se* to the fidelity, not each individually to the fruit produced. "Ten cities" bore no proportion to being faithful with a *mina**. It was evidently favour, but ten to him who had gained ten, five to him who had gained five, had a mutual proportion to the fidelity and labour. The great point here is grace valuing the favour of the Lord, and introducing, in grace and by grace, the sense of responsibility, and the desire to be well-pleasing to Him, and so to labour with what is confided to us for Him. The *mina** was the Lord's also, not theirs. That which was theirs, through grace, was service with the *mina** through living fidelity to Him who had given it, and was absent. The third did not waste, did not make away with, nor prove unfaithful to the trust of the money, but he was

* *Mina*, μνᾶ, translated 'pound.'

not faithful to the confidence which the trust implied. Why give him money to put in a napkin? Want of confidence in the Lord always deprives of spiritual intelligence, as confidence in Him is the source of it. But we are so close in relationship and responsibility to God, that if we have not a gracious and good character of Him, we always form a wicked and a false one. The responsibility, however, exists whether or no, and if He returns in the glory of His power, and if we have formed a strong idea of His severity and exaction, why have we not laboured, or at least acted accordingly? In a false character formed of God, there is always the grossest inconsequence of conduct, for it is false in the heart, and responsibility is neglected, self coming in. Where grace is not understood, all the conduct flows from a deceitful lie in the heart.

—21. "For I feared thee" (ἐφοβούμην) is the word of a naughty and unfaithful heart, of a bad conscience. The Lord judges on the conduct due, on the estimate formed by the heart itself. On its own shewing, the responsibility existed, the talent was there; where was the consequent conduct? All the acquisition of spiritual competency remains, and even is added to in those that have been faithful. In the unfaithful, the boon bestowed is taken away. They had it not in relation with God whence all its power and force flowed. Having judged first His servants, as is the case with the Lord towards us, He then judges the Jews, His enemies, who would not have Him reign over them.

—27. "Before me," for it is on His return, and the sentence of His indignation in His presence. Thus having said, He drew near to Jerusalem, still going on towards the devoted city.

—31. Jesus still acts on His supreme and holy Lordship, knowing, directing and having all things at His command; the wills—for His people shall be willing in the day of His power, and this was a brief demonstration of what He was and His rights—of men. "The Lord hath need of it." All the wills of the people, by this Divine influence, burst forth on this occasion, every demonstration of their joyful recognition. It was a wonderful scene, the meek and lowly Jesus, still meek and lowly, no forced pomp to demand honour from the careless, but a Divine influence pervading all hearts. Himself in wonted meekness and lowliness, the Object of universal recognition and praise, for He had done all things well. Divine influence which wakes, and gives memory, the stubborn and forgetful heart, gives it spring in taking off the load of selfishness. Gratitude in mindfulness of innumerable benefits, sense of Divine presence in the Messiah, which awakens the sense of the Source of it all, concur to give life, to raise, and to sound loud the chord of praise thus struck by the presence of Jesus. For what incidents in His life, and how far deeper the truth than all these incidents, they were but as the tops of the rocks which, reaching to the everlasting depths of the sea, were the occasion of the expression of its force in awakened majesty on the surface. Man saw it then, and feared and honoured; but thought taught of God pursues it into the infinitude of what it, as hidden though, thus revealed. But for a moment all was awakened in joy and recognition, the gleam of Divine Jewish truth ere the sunset, and the sad night-storm came on. All was calm, but prognostic of far other things. Over against long loved Jerusalem,

thus in mercy visited, the sound of praise awoke—awoke to the city plunged in the deepest slumber of unbelief. What a work was here too of Jesus! As far as man's mere heart, that gained; but there must be a new life, and Divine power to rescue it from the power and dominion of Satan. Yet it was an evident Divine influence at the time, thus distinguishing clearly between a Divine influence on the natural man, which may exist to any, the greatest possible extent, and the giving of life from above. This is Eternal. But I know of no limit to the extent of the other except life that is not there at all, but to the action of the Holy Spirit, of Divine agency, on what is there. It was not properly the Holy Spirit here, *i.e.* according to the force of the New Testament, and therefore was a reparable departure, *quoad hoc*. It operated in a Jewish form, recognized Him with Jewish though Divine joy as a Jewish Messiah, because of the mighty deeds which He had done. It was the King who came in the name of the Lord. God was the object of their praise. Messiah was the presentation of His power in their favour.

—38. The King coming in the name of the Lord inspires this principle, for they spoke under the enthusiasm of Divine influence, that they on earth no longer subject to the consequence of wrath and malediction above, to the malice of Satan who had title of accusation against them. Peace was in heaven, for the King could appear. It was not a temporary peace of patience on repentance, but all was at peace above, for the King, the full testimony of favour and Divine complacence, the accusation of evil removed, all peace in the Divine thoughts towards them was actually here. It was not peace produced by grace

acting towards us here, peace on earth, but a Jewish thought that God was at peace with them fully. A rest of peace above, and therefore they had the Messiah, for God was at peace with them. Heaven, no longer tormented with the witness of evil, Satan cast down and incapable, no cloud there, the odour of rest before Jehovah, before God. The odour of (*hannikhoakh*, rest) had been presented, met the thought of their minds as to its effect ; "And I will no more curse" the consequence. Therefore I say 'the enthusiasm of Divine influence,' for it was not the new man taught by the Holy Spirit in full holy, calm knowledge. How many sighs, and how much sorrow of heart over Jerusalem had been the effect of that! But the conclusions of joy and delight, which flowed from the impression of the fact of Messiah being there by Divine influence, conclusions true abstractedly, but which showed no Divinely taught knowledge of the real state of things. Yet the praise most right, for it was not the moment for that knowledge in them. And in the Divine counsel and will it was so, for the just glorifying of the Son of God, and the judgment on the blind and wilful of His rebellious and obstinate people follow. Christ represented this full and perfect love, and the calm perfection of a knowledge full of sorrow. Was their joy then wrong ? No ! It would not be realized. It was ignorant, for they knew not what the rebellion of the heart of man was, but righteous, in this sense God owned it. The stones would have cried out to honour Jesus, if these had not. Yes, the stones, for honoured He must be even then, the Son of God in the midst of despite could not pass without receiving honour, seeing what He had suffered, done, was. It could

not be otherwise. There would have been a claim of righteous honour crying out, which must be answered. It was not to be accomplished, it is true, but owned, and in this righteous dignity the Lord proceeds now. He does not lose His lowliness personally the least, but He was not hiding to be able to serve, and as a Servant that God only might be honoured, and His full moral character produced, but Himself presenting Himself in the dignity of His Person, Jehovah, King, acting on the hearts of His disciples and the people, the sign of Divine presence, however blind the rest, and in this relation presenting Himself to Jerusalem and the governors among the people, to the nation. It was a marvellous scene, remembering who and where it was.

But to Pharisee all God's glory was wrong, and he alone right, and the orderer and watch of what was right. The stones would have had more sense than he, for they would not have resisted God. But if joy and praise were among the multitude, under this influence, which were with Him, tears were His portion. What a singular contrast! The only righteous, and rightly influenced, shouting for joy, and yet Jesus weeping! How is this? Alas! it is continually so. The intelligence of Divine things will ever give sorrow while man is before us, till Divine accomplishment is come, and the time of deepest sorrow when those who rest on the impression of the moment are fullest of joy, for it is the impression of what might abstractedly be of the true blessing of the moment, and the very thought of this gives force to the consciousness, which needs yet no contrast that it cannot be because man is. Was it a false joy? Oh, no! The stones would have cried out, but it was joy for that which the

nation and city would spue out, and reject, and hate. It added to sympathy and love, bitterness on reflection; when Jerusalem presented it to Jesus, tears. So when the conversion of the world is announced, and hearts rejoice in it, is it a false joy? By no means. Far from it. It should be so abstractedly. It is due to Christ's love. The power of God is there. The Lord rouses and influences His disciples, but the more one is convinced that power is in the Spirit, that it is the debt of this dispensation, that we must look to the Spirit for it, the more, if we understand the real state of things where the Church is, the more shall we be plunged in sorrow and humiliation. The Lord direct our hearts, in faithful testimony, to the end in energy and love, yet with all depth of intelligence of the real case of the rejection and neglect, that the Church has not persevered in the goodness of God, and will be cast off, yea, spued out of Christ's mouth, the righteous Judge in the Churches in indignation and offended grace, and follow His heart who went on with all the means, though in the certainty from the beginning, where all would end. For harvest of joy according to the perfection of God, there will be, but man will not have it now. Better to sow in tears and reap in joy, when Jesus shall joyfully, and in measure according to His joy, for He had it in that which the Lord gave Him by the way, than to sow with apparent joy, and the harvest be a heap in the day of sorrow. He did drink of the brook, but it was in humiliation. It was just that secret joy received in humiliation to continue His labour, dependence on, refreshing thankfulness for refreshing received in entire humiliation of will. He drank of it in the way. Later He will lift up the head. Oh, for a spirit to follow Him!

What interest the Lord takes too in all the particulars of her sorrow! If indeed the righteous indignation of the Lord was upon her, He is afflicted in all her affliction. He counts and treasures up her tears. He thinks, as His servants touched by His Spirit after, upon her stones, and it pitieth Him to see her in the dust. Oh, "If thou hadst known, at least," all would have been pardoned then—"in this thy day"—what a day for Israel! For if all her sin was accumulated, all grace was accumulated too by virtue even of that, and the Divine tenderness, but, alas! to sum up, Jesus', if not Jerusalem's, His beloved's sorrows. Now they were hid from their eyes. No! the joy and acclamation, just joy and acclamation of His disciples gave occasion to, rather than wiped the tear of Jesus. He justified it indeed. It was righteous, but He knew the truth. A Mary Magdalene, or a thief on the cross carried Him farther, beyond what was to fail, and ministered comfort and joy to a dying Saviour, for it was grace. Owning His royalty was right, but led to tears; but preparations for His burial in love, and the confession of a brigand, carried Him on into a Paradise where sin and man in ruin were not, into the depth of Divine grace. All as to Jerusalem hung on this: "Thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."

The next thing the Lord does is, with just indignation, to purge the Temple, indeed He went out to Bethany, and returned, and did this on the morrow. But here it was the morally consequent act, the judgment pronounced of the King entered. God's House was a house of prayer; that was its moral character, not of sacrifice. It was not thus God designated His House, though that were done there,

but in grace to need of those that had need. Where His presence and ear was was a house of prayer, where all wants were told to God, and He was there the Depositary of all grief and all need; and they had made it a den of thieves. Note it is the sin against the gracious character of God that the Lord notes as the sin against the Temple of God. His charge is very general: "Ye have made it." For all evil thus permitted, and gone along with, is really common guilt on all, for the heart allows and concurs in it. But the spirit which lusts to envy soon showed itself. The people, who were nobody, gladly heard; they had no reputation, and externally they sought the good, but the chief priests scribes, and principals of the people, the chiefs of religion, learning, specially religious learning, and of place or power, sought to get rid of Him. It was natural they should, for He was true, and all their state and place was false, and they traitors to what was of God in it, using the Divine honour of it to their own glory. To the people, good was good, because they needed good; to the rulers, and priests and scribes not, because it displaced their pretentions, detected their hypocrisy, and wounded their pride. Yet Satan had power over all this, one and the other, for it needs an absolute and real deliverance to be out of his power, an actual deliverance of God. God working in us to set us free, by making Himself the only Object. Otherwise, the habits of religion and pre-eminence rest in force over the mind, and, though convinced in conscience that Jesus is true and the Lord, there is no power to resist what has power over the flesh, for the life which emerges from out of it all, strengthened in the Holy Ghost, is not there. The time was not yet come for Him to be offered up, and He

was there in the dignity of His untouched Person till the full time of Divine counsel was come, that the people might have the full witness and testimony of grace and perfectness, and the iniquity of the rulers and great men ripen to its conclusion and accomplishment. The position, and total want of conscience, and selfishness, in His rejection, of their rulers and religious authorities, is brought out in what follows.

Chapter XX.

In truth, what profound iniquity marks their conduct! They had been occupied with their particular interests which Jesus thwarted, but the testimony of John, which they dared not disown, was plainly before them. And how perfectly opposed was their interest with that of the people! Alas! it is ever so. With the interest of souls, of God's people as a mass professedly, always are they the instrument and power of evil, and hindrance of good. They sought nothing but their own credit. But there was One who put them to a loss in their shame. Indeed the question was one of confusion and helplessness. No discernment, no power of judging, nor, if evil as they alleged it, power to hinder it. They come to demand from Him. They condemned what was the source of His power and authority. It assumed indeed authority on their part, but demonstrated total want of power. It also demonstrated their want of interest in, and insensibility to good. A conscience toward God would have honoured the righteous zeal of

God's house, love of truth received His teaching, as bowed their hearts too before the testimony of His miracles. But the jealous question: "Who gave thee this authority," marks where all their interest was. Authority ill placed cannot bear power if accompanied by ever so much goodness and truth. But this is the ecclesiastical spirit always, when the spirit of mere service is gone. The Lord appeals at once to their conscience, when they dared not own or disown, and thus rested self-condemned, for this authority is, after all, dependence. It is also of mercy to us that the Lord's appeal puts all question of miracles aside, for John did no miracles, but all he said was true, and wrought in the power and testimony of the Spirit. There was no principle in them confessing their incapacity to judge a matter which concerned the whole nation from God, which all the people bore witness to (because it bore to Him really). The Lord declined to recognise their authority. But in all this there is a much more open taking of a place by the Lord. He does not hide Himself, and go out of the Temple; the ministry was ended, the crisis come, and full testimony must be borne. He sits there publicly in the Temple teaching, and owns and silences the chief priests and elders when they come to Him, yet never assuming anything, nor giving up His place of meekness, but knowing how to deprive them of all power to act by revealing their real place and nothingness to themselves by themselves, for He had the key of conscience. This is more or less ours according to our measure in the Spirit, so that all our adversaries should be ashamed.

—9. The Lord by presenting a case, in which through want of integrity they had to avow their utter want of

capacity to direct the people of God, having entirely set aside these rulers, yet by themselves, assuming nothing to Himself, and refusing nothing in them of which they had the form, but having their own avowal of incapacity, yet as we have seen in a far higher tone than of old, for the time for judgment, the judgment of truth, was come, proceeds to announce to the people the real state of the case, and instruct them, for He could, of the result, and of their conduct, God's judgment of their conduct. Silencing the rulers did not set aside the power of evil, though it might prove the evil, for it was not the time now to vindicate the right, nor execute judgment, though the case was clear. If they did not render the good, nor discern the good, they would seek to get rid of all testimony and claim to it, and make good their security in evil, if they altogether rejected, as they failed to produce, good and righteousness. Their responsibility was thus doubly complete in evil, failure to render, and violent rejection of all claim of God.

—13. What affecting patience! God is, as it were, at a loss how to act, and get at the conscience and heart of those He had so favoured, and by one immense act tries if anything can recall them to a sense of their position, but it did but bring out the evil. "My beloved Son"—the Lord presents what was in God's mind. How He acted from it, and from His estimate, as it were, of such ways, not from the wretched selfishness and rebellion in which the heart of men, of His favoured people, was plunged, in such love to them that He will venture all on the hope to reclaim them, for He loved His people! It was not here question of purpose in the act, though God's character and purpose really go together. He reveals one by the accom-

plishment of the other. But here it was responsibility flowing (as it ever flows) from the fullest revelation of God's character, acting generously, shall I say, after the manner of men, on the generous expectation or hope of sensibility, capacity to feel in others if not good. "I will send My beloved Son." How should One, perfectly good, estimate the deep malignity of impotent but pure evil and malice? As Judge surely He will and does, but God acts so as to produce, by the real demonstration of His character, the fullest responsibility in that which He presents to man. The life-giving power of His grace is another thing, and is in His hand, and He accomplishes, as He has fully provided for it, in Jesus, His death, His life. But He lays the ground of responsibility acting in love, and that by what has withal the highest claim on our obedience, subjection, affection, and respect — He sends His Son, under this character, His heart going forth in doing it. "What shall I do? I will send My beloved Son." So did God to this unhappy and self-destroying people, whom He had taken from the iron furnace, and now dealt with in the last and highest sources of His patient love. But all in vain; for what is the heart of man? That well of corruption and selfishness, the slave of Satan, and wilful only, in its enmity to God.

—14. "That the inheritance may be ours," characterises the whole principle. It is the source of their ways and action, and so of the world. They reject Him, just as having no right or business in the vineyard, and then kill Him. Necessary judgment follows. They felt the force of this, and, involuntarily as it were, cry out: "God forbid." Such were none of their thoughts. Poor people! However

involved in the ruin and sin, they were far from wishing the results. No! Israel was not thus to suffer, and be set aside. Their heart could look for no such thing; it clung, in fond though untrue associations, round the name of their glory. "The vineyard given to others" rung upon the heart of a Jew. The Lord felt this, entered into this awakened feeling, this involuntary "God forbid." His heart echoed this in a sense, and He fixed His regard upon them. "Looking upon them," He said, "What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner?" Is it not prophesied that the builders will do thus? They had not denied the justice of the conclusion, but its character had produced, when presented to them, the shock expressed in the exclamation. The Lord from the word, they thus now susceptible, proves the fact on which that judgment hung. He adds on the authority of His own, now judging, word, for He plainly declares things to them at this period; it was faithfulness, needed faithfulness at such a period. "Everyone falling on that stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall it shall grind him to powder." A general and full statement abstractedly accomplished in more than one instance. The Lord in the plainest terms declares the judgment now on His rejection, for everywhere He appears as the Superior. He who fell on the Stone, this Stone of stumbling, would be broken, as many did then, the nation did then. They stumbled at the stumbling Stone. On the individuals who rejected, the Stone fell. And so at the end, wherein also the apostate Gentiles will have part, and a chief part. It was a general principle, destruction, judgment, breaking to pieces as to their actual condition,

if they stumbled at it, as the nation did in their ignorance. But when Christ fell in judgment as on that race, as on the anti-Christian confederacy, and specially anti-Christ himself, and the false prophet, it should be utter confusion and ruin. Thus presented as Messiah, the Lord, the King, Satan would seek to entangle the Saviour in questions of the supremacy of Cæsar. All wickedness was in the question, for he used the extent and effect of their guilt (which they resisted in pride) to entangle and destroy the righteous. The subjection of God's people to Gentiles was indeed an evil, but who had brought them there? But at least they thought He should offend against Cæsar, or lose His reputation with the people. They saw clearly the parable was against them, while the people only cared for the sorrowful announcement, in a certain sense with a just, at least natural feeling. We see their object, the object of these wicked men. They could not take hold of His words before the people. May grace give holy and just influence over the people! It is the only holy resource against the authority and subtlety of the leaders of a system opposed to God. It was this in service to God, and not attacking them which distinguished the Lord, and the Apostles too. Satan humbles himself, that the bands of the poor may fall into the hands of his captains (Ps. x. 10), and the Lord's servants may at least do the same in grace, that they may be delivered. The wisdom of the Lord's answer is too obvious to need comment. He was not come then to deliver the nation from Cæsar. He could not, for they rejected Him. In adding: "The things of God to God," they were condemned in all their ways, while in saying: "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," He left them in the

position into which their guilt and sin had brought them, and where their guilt kept them; for how delivered from Cæsar, when they rejected Messiah, the Son of the Most High, their God, come in mercy and lowliness to enter into their sorrows? Was He to deliver, according to their mind, rebels, to sanction them in their rebellion? That were not mercy, for it was rebellion against God their Lord and Saviour. He leaves, therefore, the nation and leaders in their condition, only fully warning the people.

It is interesting to observe the constant use of this term: "The Stone" relative to the Lord; it is consecrated to this purpose. In Isaiah xxviii. we have Him declared to be the Stone laid in Zion, foundation and judgment against the evil Jews who made their alliance with anti-Christ and evil. In chap. viii. 14, He is the Sanctuary, but a Stone of stumbling and rock of offence. In Ps. cxviii, as here cited, His rejection by the builders of the Jews, and exaltation. In Zechariah, He is the Foundation of the Lord's house in the all-discerning purity and vigilance of the Spirit. Trace also there "eyes of the Lord," which here form part of the foundation, for otherwise, if the perfect discernment of evil and righteousness were not there, how should He maintain the foundation of Jehovah's house, and receive Jehovah's blessing? Here, because He had this, He is rejected by the builders, for they were judged, for indeed it tried all things. In Zech. iv. 7, 9, 10, as Headstone, we find the house by the same finished. In Dan. ii, as we have seen it, a Stone of judgment, as of stumbling for Israel, and also of foundation and blessing. It is ever as the Stone of judgment on the whole Gentile power. Here, in Luke, it falls on Jews at least; it is put

generally "On whomsoever" as on Gentile. In Peter, though writing to Jews indeed, yet in them, familiar with this type or symbol of Christ, we find it the Foundation in them of the Church, and we withal however living stones built on it, for there is always this difference.

—20, *et seq.* We have in these passages, not, as in Matthew, a successive judgment of the different classes of Israel, but a clear transition from the Jewish system and estate to the heavenly economy and privileges. Having pronounced the judgment on the husbandmen, and declared what the power of the rejected Stone would—they, understanding the application, for judgment reaches the conscience of the wicked, send instruments to entangle Him in His speech before the people. His answer, which left them silent, was however of the last importance. It left the subjection of Israel to the Gentiles entirely where it was; a fact of the greatest possible importance, allied to the rejection of the King Messiah. But in few and simple words, they are left there. They had rejected Him, and He broke His staff, and the poor of the flock would understand that it was the word of the Lord. And it rescued the things of God entirely from the question of Cæsar's power over the Jews. This was a fatal judgment for them, for all their relation and association with Messiah, their Jewish hopes, did hang on this deliverance, and the things of God, on Jewish principles, demanded nationally national deliverance. But the staff was really broken, and He owned them not at all. They, in their madness, loathed Him, and His soul abhorred them. In the bitterness of their need and darkness, they, unhappy people, had, with more truth than they were aware of, to cry out: "We

have no king but Cæsar," and they pronounced therein their own judgment. It was an awful thing for a Jew to say.

After the setting aside thus of the Jewish economy, there is the introduction of the resurrection economy of fellowship with the Lord, or the state of that world and the resurrection—children of God and children of resurrection. And then, after some of the Scribes owning the power of the truth in His word, at least with their understanding, and all being now hushed by the wisdom of Him who spake as never man spake, surely it was so, the Lord takes up, in an allusion to one of their own Scriptures, not merely the state of the raised faithful, but the nature of the intervening economy as to its basis, before the judgment of the Jewish people, Jehovah saying to David's Son and David's Lord: "Sit on My right hand till I make thy foes thy footstool," revealing the state of the risen, and intimating the position of Messiah, and the ground of the delay of judgment: "Sit on My right hand till." He proceeds then, notwithstanding the applause of the Scribes, to the separate instruction of His disciples, beginning with warning against them, though perhaps there might even be a remnant there also.

—27. It is evident that the Sadducees connected the resurrection with the letter of the Jewish economy. When the pain of its introduction is over, man's heart which loves a large self, and that which attaches itself to his position, attaches all to the economy in which his glory is. It is not the Word, or the revelation of God to the conscience, but the lazy honour of circumstances, in which we are, which requires no faith. The Lord transplants it

at once into another economy and dispensation, and the difference between the two is distinctly marked. There was a great general principle; "this world," and the introduction of the resurrection Kingdom and glory (by the rejection of Jesus by the Jews) threw necessarily all the Jewish system, as the Gentiles, into a common "that world." It belonged to this life, this nature, this world and its principles. But there was "that world" to which the resurrection from amongst the dead belonged, which stood in the power and nature of a quite other life. Those who had title to it were children of God, being born by the power of resurrection, the energy of the Divine life communicated through Him in whom was life, whom death could not hold, but who had power to lay down and to take up. Both demanded the same power of the Life of God.

There was a world for the fallen Adam, heir of death, and interests, and principles which belonged to it. There was a world for the Second Adam according to the principles, and objects, and character of that power of life which was manifested in His resurrection, and in which what was suited to One that had passed into it by the condemnation of His death, the annihilating by His death of all that flesh was heir to, and in a new life which had no association with the springs of joy of fallen Adam—suited to the risen Lord, and His co-heirs through grace would be found. They also are children of resurrection. Fallen man cannot be child of God. Innocent man there is none. All must be begun afresh by that which justified all of God in the condemnation of the old, told the truth of its state, and yet produced those who were subject to it, according to

the energy of Him who had removed every defilement in the power of a life which necessarily had its own character and its own desires. A new world, and a Second Adam were needed to accomplish the glory of God in a benevolence and excelling worthy of Him, and that Adam must be His Son, for who else could it be? And that world, and that Adam were in resurrection, and children of God in a higher, better, infallible shape.

The only question which arises on it at all is what room it leaves in its testimony for the existence of men in the flesh during the period of "that world," and it does not seem to me to touch that question. On the other hand, the state of the departed as the final state of the believer is entirely negatived by this passage. The existence of man is adduced as proof of the necessity of his resurrection, and while this continued existence is asserted as life not to man visibly indeed, but to God, the idea of that state as a recognized state of continuance is not even supposed. Moses intimated the resurrection in saying God was the God of Abraham, when Abraham was, according to man's thought, dead. A Sadducee saw nothing beyond this life. The word of the Lord revealed another, but it was a resurrection one, not a vague, uncertain continuance of something which continued already, but of which the continued existence of those who were dead before God was the pledge and proof. And this was owned in the word of the Lord: "I am the God of Abraham." Further, the Lord intimates that this was no extraordinary revelation of the Prophets, no peculiar effect of a dispensation now introduced, though this might be avowedly based on the truth now revealed. It was not only a truth, but the

economy was based on this truth, for man in his state of nature was treated as lost. It rested on the primary revelation given to the people of God, when the relation in which He stood towards those first called out from the world was revealed. Moses intimated it. It lay at the root of all Israel's real hopes, for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob could not participate with Israel in the hopes of Israel, unless they were raised from the dead. In sending Moses to call Israel out of Egypt, God declares that He is the God of Abraham, etc., thus indicating that the promises of God rested for accomplishment for a future dispensation, in which these fathers would have part, and consequently there would be resurrection of the dead. The manner and order are not intimated. They might be raised to have part here below, not the same part, but part, or else in the heavenly places, or all might be raised. But this is not entered into here, but the great fact of a relationship with God which stood in a life in the power of resurrection, and this in the very earliest bases of Jewish promise and Jewish hope, the name of God, on which all their hope was based, for indeed they are beloved for the Fathers' sakes. The Law is but entered in by the bye.

All heresies touch the foundation when judged by the Spirit of God. That God was the God of Abraham, was the foundation of Jewish hope and Jewish promise. That God was the God of a dead man that did not exist, was folly. If all lived to Him, which was true, yet if it was merely his spirit in heaven, he as a man was under the power of death, and there could be no association whatever with Israel or the promises, and hopes of man thus put separated for God's earthly people. The Patriarchs must

rise again. It stood, as we have said, as the link of the Name God took, and Israel's hopes. When these hopes were centred in David, the sure mercies of David convey to the mind of the Apostle, by the Spirit, the same necessary conviction in its accomplishment in the resurrection of Jesus, in whom these promises were to be fulfilled. Here the necessity of resurrection, and the continuous life which proves and assures it, are mentioned in the same sentence. It is exactly the principle of the Apostle in 2 Cor. v. though the order be inverse, for here it is the revelation from what God was—there the consequence of what man was heir to and assured of, the nature and ground of his inheritance, and the conclusion drawn to the intermediate life, here from God's nature, and promise, and the intermediate life revealed.

Having thus based the promises of God, and that even in their expression to Abraham, or at least as in relation with Abraham when making Himself the God even of earthly hope and earthly promise, the Lord proceeds to lay the foundation of it all in the glory of His Person, which, necessary when searched into, set the glory above the earth, and introduced principles, which were not Jewish, and which in fact had their accomplishment in the rejection of Christ by Israel, accomplishment founded on the plain manifestation of the incapacity of man to be blessed here below in relationship with God, but which had its source and firmness in the Divine glory of the Person of the Messiah, making Him capable of sitting on the right hand of God, His perfect accomplishment of His Father's will, and of all the counsel of God in obedience, having glorified God fully on earth, which rendered Him qualified in strict

and necessary righteousness to take His place there, and thus while righteously owned meanwhile, prove the case and position of those who had rejected Him who came in the fulfilment of their own hopes and prophecies here below, and by abundant mercies should have attracted the heart of man, let his hope or his ignorance be what it might. But learning, not ignorance, formed the barrier, for Christ made His way to the heart of the ignorant; learning made its difficulties for vanity's sake. To these learned it was that the Lord presented a question which, while it rested on the most important question of their religion, really condemned, or had its accomplishment in their entire condemnation. The Lord cites not this till they are in this state of condemnation, and signalises this state by the citation. It placed Messiah in a heavenly state, the Jews in the place of enemies. While the Lord however proves the entire incapacity of the scribes to instruct the people, by their ignorance of the most important point of the whole system of Jewish truth, He condemns them, as is ever the case, before the people on the plainest points of hypocritical conduct.

—35. This is exceedingly plain. Note also the life of the righteous is evidence of their resurrection, *quod nota;* therefore their resurrection of their life. This utterly destroys the notion (unbelieving, I think) of those who feign that the souls of the just are not properly alive till the resurrection, and the appearing of Jesus. They are indeed confounding the whole specialty of revelation in this matter, as well as unbelievingly denying the believer's hope, to wit, to be with Christ alive on leaving the body. Also it is expressly affirmed here in the statement of the

blessed Lord, "For for him all live," in a distinct and revealing way, in which the "for him" has great force, for indeed they are not manifested. And here we may compare John's discovery in due time of "the souls of those beheaded;" Rev. xx. 4. Note also, though there we have only those under the Gentile dispensation, here we have both, nay the conclusion drawn from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and then laid upon its general necessity, for indeed they deprive the Lord of half His Kingdom, or else make Him a God of the dead, who disbelieve that those who are dead are asleep till the resurrection. Nay! but let us rather believe that, whether we die we die unto the Lord, so that whether we live or die we are the Lord's. For indeed the thing could not be, for if we did not live to Him we should never live again, nor be the same persons. And the idea of the soul's sleeping is nonsense. But we believe that them that sleep in Jesus shall God bring with Him. In a word it is mere unbelief.

Chapter XXI.

All the wealth which sustained the outward service of God passed for nothing. The Lord looked at the real devoted love of the heart there was to Him, and to His service. There is much to be learned yet from this passage. There may be a very evil system, a system now judged, and a sincere soul minister to it most acceptably, but then the Lord judges not the least according to the system, but according to the principles of that righteousness aud grace which distinguish it from the system, and by which the

system was even judged and condemned. He knows how to separate the intention of the individual and own it, while by that itself He judges the whole state of that with which the individual is associated. The difference of giving one's living, and one's superfluity, is evident. One may, when self is satisfied, compliment God with presents, and make it minister to self. But she who gives her living gives herself, devoted all to God, and depends on God; the whole is in action towards God, in devotion and in faith. The two mites were the most perfect expression of it, for need and everything to hinder it was there, and the applause of men, and the pride of the donor could find no place here. It was true love to God, and confidence in Him; for Jewish splendour it had little worth.

The account which the Lord gives in this Gospel of the sorrows of Jerusalem is also much more allied to the simple fact of the judgment on the nation, and the change of economy; consequently, although there be clear reference to what arrives at the end in the latter day, much more to the then present time, and setting aside of Jerusalem than in the other Gospels. Certain remarked the beauty and riches of the deposits of the Temple. The Lord declared that all these things should be destroyed. This declares the judgment to fall on all the outward wealth of the Temple, and the whole outward relationship of God with it, as the smallest act of grace was preferred to it all in what preceded. The question in reply also, here observe, extends itself only to the fact of the destruction, and consequently, in what follows, we have the judgment on the nation taken as a whole from the time of its then destruction till the times of the Gentiles (with whom, or the economy of whom at

least, this Gospel so much occupies itself) be fulfilled. All is taken together. Jerusalem trodden under foot till then. And indeed otherwise it would have been imperfect, for though to the Jews the existence of Jerusalem and a Temple, whatever their infidelity, evidently made the greatest difference, and this will have existed at the two periods of national judgment by the Gentiles, and national judgment with the anti-christian Gentiles by the Lord Himself—for so great as that is the difference—yet to the Gentiles all was one long scene in relationship to the Jews. Jerusalem was, is, and will be then trodden down of the Gentiles till their times are fulfilled, and that by the judgment of the Lord.

We may remark, if the Lord have cast away His delight and desire in the earth, and broke the band, then it is not great marvel if to us it must be broken which nature and habit have formed for our ease, pleasure, or aggrandisement. The manner of the Lord's address is also much more general here—certain said—and though much applies to those that were faithful, the distinction is more between Jews and Gentiles than disciples and Jews. The scribes are denounced as evil, but the nation, the people are addressed as (men) listening. The sign given here is in no wise "the abomination of desolation," a prophetic sign of evil, but an historical fact—Jerusalem encompassed with armies. Its desolation was then nigh. The days of vengeance then had place, and the time of testimony was closed, for there is a difference in the character of tribulation, the trials of the faithful, and the judgment of the evil, and evil doers—both may be by means of men. With this, though the distinction may require the watchfulness

of spirituality, the Saints have nothing to do, as is evident. If they eat and drink with the drunken, no marvel if the evil overtake them, even if they be saved so as by fire.

The progress towards Jerusalem would be gradual. It would at last be the centre of these operations, but many tumultuous waves would toss in flux and reflux before that, but the end was not immediately. It is not in this Gospel said when the end should be, because the precision of the latter days is not entered on, but there was another subject apart. Nation should indeed rise against nation. There would be signs, frightful sights from heaven. But before all these things, there would be hostility against them before Satan would raise up the tumultuous waves of the nations to overwhelm the once-beloved, and by him therefore hated city, left to judgment. He would seek to destroy the testimony which the Lord would certainly send in the devoted country first. But the disciples were to continue notwithstanding all this, or their sufferings, to render their testimony, untroubled by rumours, undismayed even by death, while the unhappy devoted city, where the testimony yet was, filled up the measure of its iniquity; see Matt. xxiii. 32. But the Lord's eye was ever on them; He would permit the trial, but He had counted the hairs of their head, not one of them would be lost. It was a time of appointed trial and testimony. There must be suffering, for they were evil and rebellious. There must be testimony, for He was good. But this from the very nature of it, for it was a final effort of goodness, could not last, and the sign to the disciples that judgment, the time of judgment was now come on His people was, Jerusalem the beloved city now encompassed with armies. Its desolation now

approached; they were then to flee, not to return. They were days then of vengeance. All that was written was to be fulfilled. They have not ceased yet, but will have indeed a much more signal fulfilment.

—18. The Lord's mind must have been in a very different world, to say: "They shall kill some of you, but there shall not a hair of your head perish."

I see four instructions very distinctly here, in two distinct parts on two distinct grounds. The first general—the danger of the effect of what passed in seducing or bewildering them. The second, the actual trials or difficulties they would find themselves in; the trials the Remnant were in by their faithfulness, and the trials the nation were in by their unfaithfulness. First, "See that ye be not led astray, for many shall come," etc.; verse 8. Secondly, "When ye shall hear . . . . be not terrified," for "the end is not immediately." "Then He said to them," such and such things will come, but before all these things you yourselves will be in trial and affliction, judged, put to death, but I will assist you. "By your patient endurance possess your souls." Fourthly, "Let those who are in Judæa flee to the mountains," etc. "For these are days of avenging," etc. Then the Lord proceeds to pronounce and describe the time of judgment and vengeance. But besides, it was not merely a judgment on the Jews, but on the Gentiles also, for the powers of the heavens, the sources of authority were shaken as in Haggai and Hebrews xii. "The habitable earth" (οἰκουμένη) here is the scene in question, the responsible organisation of the earth before God (the Lord). And then they would see the Son of Man coming with power and great glory.

Consequently, when these things, terrible to the children of men, began, they should lift up their heads for their redemption drew nigh. For the judgment of the world is the deliverance of the Remnant. When the grounded staff (decreed rod) falls, it is with tabrets and harps.

These things, it seems to me, are in general, *i.e.* when the signs which marked Jerusalem's judgment, and man's confusion, and efforts, and terror, began to show themselves, they knew the end, and discerned their character. Men were astounded and amazed because they did not see the end, and trembled as they were dragged along to some awful and unknown conclusion. For principles were at work which dragged them, they knew not how, along whether or no. The Lord's coming disclosed all the scene to the believer, the disciple. Redemption here shows clearly earthly disciples, for earthly deliverance by judgment here, not the Church. The Lord in mercy turns the terror of man into a sign of the deliverance of the disciple, for it is terrible to man, to flesh, to see all things breaking down from under it, all props going. The Lord's coming met all, while it separated entirely from all.

We have further here a remarkable evidence that the Kingdom of God is not the Gospel of grace, for when they see all these things, they are to conclude that the Kingdom of God is nigh. Whether it be the first destruction of Jerusalem, or that of the latter days, it is evident that the power of the Gospel was extended far and wide before either in fact. The manifestation of its influence declined rather from that time, as we see in the later Epistles, and in the addresses to the Churches in the Apocalypse. But the things which they saw here were signs like the budding

of the trees, and the Kingdom of God evidently at the coming of the King, when God Almighty takes His great power and reigns. That there was a partial analogous judgment in the destruction of Jerusalem is true, which introduced the sorrows of the Jews in the time of vengeance, and the treading down of Jerusalem, but it is evident from verses 25—28, that the signs introduce the Son of Man in His Kingdom. If it be asked, What then is "this generation shall not pass" until all take place? If the whole scene be viewed as one which the Lord does—Jerusalem trodden down of the Gentiles till in fact it was so—as a period, but viewed as one, the generation is viewed as one also, as in Deut. xxxii, "I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end." The long suspense before their end alters not the position of the generation. It passes in few words in its great character—Jerusalem trodden down—the Lord's face hidden. The Lord has provided for His then disciples in what was needful, but in the written word also for the like times to come. Still, though the principle be always true, it is evident that verse 34 applies to a day coming on the earth—those dwelling on the face of all the land or earth. The privilege is to escape the judgments and stand before the Son of Man. This is purely Jewish—before the Son of Man coming here below —though the character of the address be more general and discipular, as in Matthew more addressed to Jews, here rather to disciples, though about what should happen to Jews, there to Jewish disciples.

—33. There is much solemnity in this expression. It is evident that deeper interests than a casual change as to Jerusalem, or its capture were in question. But Jerusalem

was the beloved city, the city of the Eternal, hedged in by a thousand privileges, sustained by a confidence which rested on these privileges, on ancient hopes, and present prosperity. But what had made it so? The word of the Lord. And His word now judged it with all this fortification of hope to rest in. All passed before the word of the Lord; they were no better than the scoffers in 2 Peter iii. They might be shut up in darker bondage by a carnal confidence in forfeited privileges, for the effect of faith is to discover the sin against privilege, not in sin to reckon on its constancy, but to seek its enjoyment in repentance. But now, in the day of their visitation, they would not, and their prosperity, and their continuance, in which they rested, passed as the cloud of the morning, and found no place, nothing to sustain it. Yet, as Apostle of mercy, the Lord yet returned to give testimony, walking in the day, but His resting place was as where He was ready to depart, the point whence He went, and where His feet shall stand in that day—patient in service, at night separate from the judged and devoted city.

Thus also with greater ease, now devoted Himself, Judas accomplished the service to which he had given himself up to the Chief Priests. Thus also by His continual teaching in the Temple, His position was forced upon the Chief Priests and scribes, who became null by the power and authority of His word and presence. It was not a movement for applause, but authority on the conscience. Jesus had not thus put Himself forward before; He had taught when He came up, but had retired and gone to Galilee, to Ephraim, etc., but His time was now come to be delivered up. He stands prominent before Israel, and yet

separated from it. The attention of the people was remarkably drawn to His teaching, for everything was evidently drawing to a crisis, and the Priests must get rid of Him, if He were not to lead all the people after Him. But the Lord was not to reap His harvest; it had been too poor here. Here this grain was to abide alone, however fully ripe and perfect. But, withal, vast preparation had been made for the manifestation of a people by the Holy Ghost; we are apt to forget this sometimes. But God does all things in their season. But if the influence on man was such as to at once increase the desire and the difficulty to get rid of Jesus, Satan, the hour being now come in which this was permitted, takes his part that the cup of wickedness may be full, and sorrow on either side at the moment of the memorial of God's great deliverance of the people, and this Victim must be offered, which should fulfil and replace for ever that of which the other was but type.

Chapter XXII.

—3. We have here another example of the generality with which Luke speaks as to the dates of circumstances. Satan entered into Judas. This was what was morally necessary here to present; the particularities of it were not so here. Satan put it into Judas's heart at this time, and entered strictly into Judas after he received the sop. The general fact in its full bearing was all that was important here. All this was Satan's own work, whoever the unhappy instrument—one of the twelve—one nearest to

Jesus. And then the rulers of the people, under Satan's guidance, agree in the awful crime of this terrible accomplishment of iniquity—it needs not to say anything.

I find yet in the midst of the most perfect abstraction from all worldly acceptance and honour, the Lord, passing into the perfection of His suffering, is enabled, as it were, by being entirely absorbed into those that owned Him from the effect of His patience and lowliness on the people, for they rejected Him, into the counsels of the Lord and God's thoughts concerning Him, to act naturally with the authority and manifested dignity which belonged to His Person, and was the subject of those counsels. The more He is rejected of men, the more He is thrown into God's thoughts respecting Him. It is always the path of faith, sometimes painful but always glorious in result. It depends on what is, for indeed if what is in us is too excellent for that through which we move, it will be rejected and even hated by the spirit which lusteth to envy.

But then God (of whom it is) will give it its place, and so manifest His justice, His righteousness. Grace does this in us; in Christ it was what He really was in Himself. This was also necessary at the end, to vindicate His true glory, and their evil, and make us feel where we are in this scene—this scene which stands utterly alone in heaven and earth, in all ages, and that the light of His true glory, even here below, might be cast upon and give their true colour to the darkness into which He was now entering for sin, but of grace. And what calm and peaceful dignity! It is no effort, nothing to display a character. All yields before the unwitnessed authority of this rejected and despised of men, all but that to which it had been most

manifested and revealed, the unrenewed heart of man. How little does the Lord leave His simplicity! And yet in what heavenly and Divine dignity is all He needed led to form itself around His will, to manifest His Divine knowledge of all things. To this householder there was One, "The Teacher," honoured in his obedience, though unknown; to every eye it seems but One. We have withal these traits at the close of a wider work than was manifested, wrought by the Saviour on earth. It was not His part to reap it here below—the corn of wheat must die—but others did where He had sowed. It is the part of the Holy Ghost to manifest. Christ laid the foundation, and the Lord, by the Holy Ghost, added to the Church. Yet withal it was the Hellenists who first were called in; the dwellers of Jerusalem thereon addressed by Peter.

—14. But now we come to the expression of all the Lord's mind on this scene on His now position, deeply to be weighed. "The hour was come." How the Lord's mind must have been bent upon the subject of His departure, and have felt the weight, and all the importance of it!

—15, etc. The Lord, it seems to me, distinguishes here between the Paschal lamb and the wine, and both from the institution of the memorial of His deliverance of His people by death. First, He desired to eat the Passover, and He did not partake of the wine. In partaking of the Passover, it was the last and deep testimony of God's faithful love to Israel as His people delivered from Egypt, and the Saviour's entering, in the fullest individual way, into all the feelings of a ransomed Jew before God, the feelings and interests of the people as such. He felt for and with Israel, and that as one of themselves too, until by His rejection they stood

on other ground, and Divine favour passed into another scene by the resurrection, and He became the Substitute, Himself the true Paschal Lamb. They rejecting their own mercies, their history, as so received, ended in His death.

But He never failed to the end, and that we may add even to the Cross, His enemies had to send a message after Him to countervail the effect of the intercession: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." But His disciples held the foremost rank on this ground of fellowship. They were happy, they His friends among Israel His people, as we have Hushai the king's friend. With them specially He had desired this last testimony of parting affection and love. He had desired it with desire. For while this was blessedly human, yet was it God manifest in the flesh, and it is good ever to remember that there is more desire in Jesus for the communion or expression of His love, for fellowship with us, than in us for it with Him. His heart was with His disciples, and He longed for this last expression here of His affection, His human but real and, in perfection and eternity, Divine affection for them He wished to be with, and, as affection ever does, find this occasion of its expression towards them. While He thus expressed His thoughts and feelings in affection to them, He was ever really the Nazarite among His people, and now, externally and painfully yet in the fulness of perfect love, took this character upon Him. Blessings were to be upon the head of Him that was separated from His brethren.

—18. This verse seems to present distinctly this Nazarite character of Christ, and it seems to me to imply that indeed this was always His character. He, in assuming manifestly this separatedness from sinners, gives us to

understand that in truth it was always so. "I will not drink of this fruit of the vine"—'I cannot have it in joy with you—take the blessedness of that which maketh glad the heart of God and man, here with man in his present state; God's Kingdom must come first.' In a certain sense, as to dispensation with the Jews, the Kingdom of God had come among them, but in the mind and counsel of God the Kingdom of God was not come. Thus, He who was always the Nazarite in spirit and life, becomes avowedly and openly the Nazarite as to the joy of God in this World. It could not be—Oh! how true! as the world was. He had taken His farewell of Jewish sympathies and recollections with His disciples, with the deepest and truest feelings, in this last earthly Passover (He was to be the Passover now). The earthly joy could not be then, and He passes openly into the character of the heavenly Nazarite till the Kingdom of God comes. If it be asked: 'Is not the Kingdom of God come?' I answer: 'In a certain sense, yes, in Spirit.' And in this sense Jesus dwells with His disciples, and the Father also, and has communion and joy with them, and they, though they see Him not, with Him. They sit in heavenly places in Him. But for the earthly actuality of it, it is evident it is not come, and the joy therefore is not actually fulfilled. This principle of the Nazarite, and the separation from sinners and the earth, is found also in the Hebrews. "For such a High Priest became us, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens." The Lord is manifestly and openly separate from sinners, as He will return the second time: "Without sin." Still in Spirit we know Him perfectly, and as perfectly, and therefore more proved in nature separate from sinners

when here below; and hence man and sin in the flesh condemned alike, while those one with Him are eternally and blessedly redeemed for brighter and better scenes, far brighter, better scenes, our hope and joy below. Thus also is the Lord declared "Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" —an expression of vast import!

The life of God in Man ever before Him, doubly proved by the resurrection, in Him in the power of it, by the Father in the acceptance of Him and all He was, by and in the resurrection, for the life of God is holiness, and power over death. He submitted to it, but it was not possible that He could be holden to it, nor derivatively, as united to Him, may it be for His now. But then the power is in Him, but a power by union; comp.: 2 Peter i, 3, 4, in Greek. And this likewise should be and is in principle true in us now as manifestly in the resurrection; only in us as Christ is in us in power over a body of death, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus making us free from the law of sin and death, for God has condemned sin in the flesh by Jesus, but by Him also sacrifice for us because of it. We have it in sorrow because of our union with a condemned world by the flesh, as Jesus was in sorrow because of the state of the world around Him, whose sorrows He partook of in love. So the new man in us, and that as in an unredeemed body, proved so, and not changed by Jesus' resurrection, and united by this body to the fallen creation. Minister too of its woes, as He, only in feebleness, in love and intercession, at least in presenting its sorrows in the expression of the Spirit to God; see Rom. viii. What a place of weakness but of glory, by

grace, to be in! What a place for the drawing forth every possible sentiment towards God, and occasion of the unfolding all the riches of His grace, of His heart towards us! Christ perfect sustains us in all this above; and there is our power, and therein the capacity of feeling the sorrow for God, in love not in selfishness.

Thus then the Lord postponed His joy till the Kingdom of God should come, which would take away and remove the evil, *i.e.*, His joy with them as in the blessing of common enjoyment in the Kingdom, for love could not do so then, and that was true really even as to them. The Lord having thus, in deep affection, joined in the last memorial with His disciples of Israel's redemption of old—having declared the impossibility of present earthly communion with them, with men and their joy, and separated Himself to God for them in love, till the Kingdom of God should come, proceeds to institute for them the memorial of His better and surer redemption, of His dying, self-denying love which did all—the memorial of Himself, for He desired, and desires to live in the memory of those He has thus loved. It was not the Lord's Passover, but: "My body given for you." If He separated Himself now to God in His joy, it was not want of love to His people, to His disciples, for it was in the act of giving Himself for them He did so. Thus in death to all the former system, to the world in the condemnation of the world, and the breaking up of earthly Judaism, He founded in the evidence of perfect love, and accomplished redemption for those who were one with Him, the ground of a memorial of this better and eternal deliverance. This was the food of their souls. They were to eat it, as Israel the Paschal lamb, as the Priests at their consecration those things wherewith the Atonement was made.

—19. With what touching simplicity and care for them does the Lord give them these symbols of His deep and infinite sufferings! He thought of them here entirely. As to the blood, the Lord gives not merely the fact of suffering, but an immense new principle. The new Covenant is established in His blood—the blood of the everlasting Covenant, through (in) which the Great Shepherd of the sheep is brought again from the dead. Here they are looked at, as to both parts, as disciples. It is not: "You and many," *i.e.* Jewish disciples and Gentiles. Old things were passed away in what was said in the previous part, and the Church was now viewed. His blood here is viewed as shed for His disciples, after the supper, for it was not in the light of intercourse here, or communion, but of the establishment of the Covenant, of the new Covenant for His disciples—the old things being passed, the expression of His love for them, though one of them was to betray Him. The passing away of the old made place for a better. When the Lord said: "New," that one word, as the Apostle reasons, decided all on the old. It was sentenced, and for ever, and Israel, as in the flesh, with it, for it was the ground of their relationship with God. But then also was there a great principle of distinction. The blood of the old Covenant sealed the undertaking of obedience by Israel in the flesh under the Law, the blood of the new the accomplishment of grace for the people who believed in Jesus by the Spirit: "In my blood which is shed for you." In fact this last principle of "Shed for you," is of all possible importance. It is the Divine accomplishment of grace brought to light beyond all question with man or thoughts of man, the accomplish-

ment of the counsels of God entirely proceeding from Him. The Jewish economy had been disposed of, enjoyment of visible communion postponed, and now the gift and efficacy of the blood of the Son of man, according to the counsels of God, for the disciples is laid as the one great basis of all dealing of the Lord with man. As to man's part in it, it was treachery and wickedness. "The Son of man indeed goes as it is determined, but woe unto that man by whom He is delivered up." It was given to them; He took it with them. This was just the difference. It was the memorial then of the basis of the new Covenant in His blood shed for them that believed in Him. It was not a mere question of Judah and Israel, for the blood-shedding of the new Covenant, while it received its accomplishment, admitted thus to peace all those who trusted in it. Further, how little of legal institution is in this revelation as to the Lord's supper. Its sense, import, and value is given, and there it is left to the faith, and love, and grace of the disciples to profit by it.

I return to remark that the Lord, in chap. xx., not only judges all classes among the Jews, but all the great subjects connected with God's relationship with Israel. First, their present state in competency to judge what testimony it was—of God or not; so that He had no reason to make them the judges of the credentials of His. They were superseded entirely. Then He judges. First, their own relationship with God as His vineyard, as established by Moses. They had rejected the Prophets seeking fruit, and lastly the Son, to have the inheritance for themselves; the Lord would destroy them. In a word, we have Israel judged in its own relationship with God, and the Stone they reject set

up; first stumbling on it the judgment passed already, then it falling on them, and whomsoever else, and grinding them to powder in the judgment to come. Next, we have their relationship with Cæsar. Sin had placed them there, but they could, though authority was lost under Nebuchadnezzar, have given to God the things that were God's, and, humbled for their sins, to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's, till God in grace interfered to deliver them by Messiah. The Lord puts them on the true ground, but leaves them where their sin had placed them, without deliverance. After the glory, He will judge the nations.

Next, He shews the resurrection, and, in its true character, the resurrection of the saints to be the key and power of the new position—God's thought and purpose from the first. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had their place in the Kingdom thus. Lastly, He introduces that which laid the basis of it all, setting David's Son as David's Lord at the right hand of Jehovah on high, when rejected on earth. The word of God without power was the test at first which doctors could not judge, which the poor knew and owned as of God without a question, because they received it in their conscience by grace, as judged Divinely by it—not judging it—for so man knows the Word. The power of the rejected Messiah, at the right hand of God as Lord, settles and gives its character to all at last.

Note in the rejection of Christ, and David's Son becoming David's Lord, we get what brings out the position of the two Adams. He does not take the place of David's Son in Israel according to promise, nor is it simply His Divine title as Jehovah, for it is Jehovah who speaks to Him as rejected as Son of David down here. There He sits till

His enemies be made His footstool, but He is Lord as set there by Jehovah. He will rule among His enemies, and He has drunk of the brook in the way, *i.e.* been humbled to dependent faith on God His Father.

The first man would be as God, exalting himself, and is abased, and, in the full development of man as Antichrist, he opposes, and exalts himself above all that is called God, or worshipped, so that he sits in the temple of God shewing himself that he is God, and pretends to mount yet higher, and set his throne above the stars of God, and be like the Most High ascending up to heaven, but he will be brought down to the pit. The Second Adam thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself and came down to the form of man—then was obedient unto death (as Adam was disobedient) even the death of the Cross; and God has highly exalted Him. It is not the man of creation but the Man of God's counsels, the Heavenly Man, exalted by God, Heir of all that God in His counsels has given to man, *i.e.*, all things which indeed this Man has created as God, and inherits as Son. And now all flows out merely from God, as of course it does, but from this Heavenly Man. Life has this character and place, righteousness also. The Kingdom hereafter—He is gone there to receive it—the inheritance of all things according to Ps. viii. That is the source and centre of the whole condition of all God's ways in Man—His place with Himself, on which all else depends, for He has put all things under His feet. The Church is united to Him there by the Holy Ghost which He has sent down, and the Father in His Name. This is the keystone of all God's ways, His purpose as to all things; and our moral relationship has its character from this. It has the

character, standing, and perfection of what God has wrought. It is the Second Man set on God's right hand, the self-humbled One, as the first or creation man was the self-exalter, tried in responsibility till Christ's death, and even after, to see if he would own the exalted One. Then adversary, shewn in principle in the Jews, thereon set aside (and specially in Paul, pattern of Israel's mercy, and the witness of sovereign grace and the Church) and finally as Gentiles, and as man in the Antichrist, when the man of the earth will give place to the Heavenly Man now exalted, with God known by faith, then displayed to man, and setting aside all that opposes. Such are the first and Second Man or Adam—the self-exalting One, and self-humbled One.

Note, too, in the consideration or execution of the most terrible judgments, and to our mind on the largest scale, the Lord never fails to see the smallest proof and fruit of grace. In the midst of the change of the whole scene, and the establishment of the heavenly place and glory of the Son of Man, and the pressure of all that was Jewish, He takes notice in grace of the two mites of the poor widow's simple hearted and devoted offering to her God. It is a blessed consideration.

Note, too, in xxi, 19, κτήσασθε (possess) is something more than "possess," *i.e.* it is not possess what I have simply, but obtain, or, as here, keep, have, when you are in danger of not keeping, as, 1 Thess. iv, 4. Cod. R. has κτήσασθαι. Though we have little of it, it is a great lesson.

It is worthy too of remark that in Luke where the histories of the siege of Jerusalem and of the end are separated, the saying that: "This generation shall not pass till all be

fulfilled," is applied not to the siege of Titus, but to the end, using the word "all." Note thus the use of "this generation" in chap. xxi., 32. If, as is clear, coming after the times of the Gentiles proves that it is not the man's life-long period, successively, but the race in that moral state, it includes the whole time of the Gentiles.

Note, we have here the full wickedness of man in chief priests and Judas, and the worthlessness of man, even when right, in the disciples. And, in opposition to this, the Divine and perfect grace of Christ, in answer to the wickedness, in giving Himself—His personal grace rising above all, however felt, in tender comfort and instruction to the disciples—and then the full owning of the fruit of grace recompensing it according to the largeness of His own heart, and the Father's counsels, in answer to the worthlessness. Besides that, we have, as regards the worthlessness, sifting, that we may know it, and, where self-confidence, this going far in utter failure, met, when judged, by perfect grace which healed.

—20. Syr. and Cod: Verc. put verse 19 before 17, and leave out 20. "Which is poured out for you," it is *τὸ ἐκχυνόμενον*, not *τῷ ἐκχυνομένῳ*. It gives the character.

—28. A striking expression of the difference of the Lord's condition during His ministry and at the end may be seen, besides all already remarked, in this verse. "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations," closing in verse 30. Then comes, prophetically, what was coming on, and the change, on to verse 37. Afterwards, as the Lord had foretold them, "they all forsook Him" (not the subject of Luke) "and fled." This is in Matthew, and in connection with His service in Israel. The Shepherd

was to be smitten and the sheep scattered. It is repeated in Mark. In Luke, as Son of man, He is "reckoned with the transgressors." The sifting of Satan is there—the question of the state of a soul and its preservation.

—30. I do not think eating and drinking refers to any physical eating in the Kingdom on earth, but their being with Christ in the glory in which He rules over the earth, and seated at His table as the King's accepted ones, and then, as such would naturally do, ruling over His subjects, and here in the most favoured position. The thought starts from verse 27. The eating and drinking after His resurrection has another object—to prove He was a real Man; comp. Acts x, 41. So Luke xxiv, 39, *et seq.*

The Lord then distinctly characterises the dispensation in which they were now to be placed. He being humbled, and that even to death, they were to walk now in the same lowliness, and not be at all as the world. No Jew, or Jewish grandeur was now recognised, for earthly grandeur was recognised among the Jews, but now it had passed, as it really was, as the rudiments of the world; so all their system, see Gal. iv, 9, 10. Therefore now the Lord speaks of Gentiles: "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship," but you, my disciples, are not to be so. All this is not the part of God's peoples. Jewish recognition, as we have said, there is none. It is now "You," disciples, or the world, Gentiles. For the Jews were lost in the world, and He, who resumed the privileges and title of the people of God in His Person, was despised and rejected of men. The people had abhorred, and were about to crucify Him. Enmity and treachery would meet its reward. It were good for him who had delivered up

the Son of Man that he had not been born; his iniquity was not altered, nevertheless the Son of Man went as it was written. This was needful morally, and in the counsel of God. His disciples must take the place where this set them. Uncertain of their own state on the one hand, as entirely feeble in the faith, and looking to themselves, but, as looking to themselves, justly distrusting themselves, desiring glory with Christ, as they ought, yet, as yet carnal, desiring it carnally and after the manner of the world, the Lord (the Holy Ghost not yet come to set them on wholly other ground) rectifies them in all this. First, greatness in the present position of His Kingdom was to be the lowliest and the nearest to the despised and rejected Son of Man. That was real greatness, considering how things stood morally before God, and that in the world which had manifested its enmity, and the true character of the heart which sought greatness in it by crucifying the Son of God. He in the world, for His whole life had been self-renunciation, He had humbled Himself. It was not only rejection by the world as if one was to wait for providence; in love He had done it for men, for them. He had humbled Himself, He had been among them as one that serveth. This was the answer, as to their position here below, to the question of their poor earthly and yet carnal hearts: "Who should be the greatest." And what a time to reason on it! What a thing is the human heart! Yet what blessed and gracious patience in the Lord! He was surely greatest, for He was, and He alone could, going alone, and lowest of all, into death. That was the character of their greatness. All other greatness, though under the form of being benefactors, was of this world. Further, as they knew not

their own hearts in this, so neither on the other side, and the Lord comforts and blesses them in owning their fidelity in the highest fullest degree, miserable as it had been, adding the other part of the economical dispensation of God. They were to be low, and nothing, like Him, He being crucified and absent.

But the Lord owns their faithful continuance with Him while in His temptations. We know what this was in them when the dark hour really came—asleep, or fugitive, or denying Him—so were they sifted. Yet by grace they had continued with Him in the time of His humiliation and temptations, to which He had subjected Himself in His life here below, for man's sake. He owns and recognises this in them, who, with gracious ill-informed anxiety, thought one of themselves might betray Him. They believed His word, distrusted themselves, but knew not yet by the Holy Ghost the fidelity and safeguard of God. Further, though to be proved and suffer here as companions of Christ here below, they were to have a Kingdom.

Here, in this dispensation, introduced by His death, conformity to His death and fellowship of His sufferings, but they who had been the companions of rejected Messiah would be the companions of glorified Messiah, and as His Father had appointed Him a Kingdom and recompense of His humiliation and faithfulness, so He to them, and that with Himself. Then the joy and dominion and power would have place—the conviviality of the Kingdom of the Lord, when all would be to His honour, and according to His holy will, His will "done on earth as it is in Heaven." He appointed it to them, for they were His servants; they

would be at His table in His Kingdom. But the Kingdom withal would be their's. They would have special relationship with Him as Head of the earthly people, having been with Him in His rejection among the earthly people. The time was not yet come for this. He humbly, and full of grace, ate the Passover with them before He suffered, and passed from recognizing the Jewish goodness of the Lord, into the suffering which became Him who should glorify God. He could not take the joy of the Kingdom. They were to take what would have been the sign of it now as the symbol and memorial of His death—that was the basis of all true joy, the need which the state of things, of men, of God's people occasioned—then suffer with Him, but afterwards they would find again their place with Messiah as Head of God's people, the twelve tribes of Israel. Analogous blessing—gracious, and full of blessing is He who has called, and saved, and suffered for, and loves us—is in store for us. We shall have our cities for our poor, and miserable, yet highly honoured service; but this was Jewish, for they were with Him in His Jewish humiliation as Messiah—that of which the Psalms are full. Thus God's part in the Jews, and in Messiah, would be owned, and they as in their ways will in the flesh set aside entirely, for both are here accepted and glorified in God, and rejected in man. They who have suffered with Christ, in Gentile service, will have their analogous glory, but they will never forget the blessing and ways of God to Israel His people, not cast away though stumbled and chastened for a season, and understand in Christ the reason and the riches of grace in it, the provoking of them to jealousy, and the reconciling of the world. What perfection

of all gracious love in this trying hour! In truth the more the Lord is oppressed, and His heart, and inward feelings forced to expression, the more we find the sweet and tender, yet unfailing grace which was in Him, and the more proved and tried, the more known and tasted. To Him be all the praise of this great grace!

But other instruction as to the character of the flesh, ourselves, and the Lord, is to be drawn for us, as brought out of these circumstances. These disciples were the little Remnant of Israel, and Messiah the Lord (the only support of Israel) was rejected. Satan had his hour here against all that was owned of the Lord, against the Head of His people, all that was owned of God. So fared in measure the sheep, attached now ever fully to their Head not yet in power, but therefore the rather sifted though guarded. If the Shepherd was smitten, it was clear the sheep were to be scattered. Here if the Lord smote the Shepherd, Satan would take his occasion against the sheep; he had desired to have them to sift them as wheat; he would have his way, for the Lord knew His end in it, and its result and effect through grace, which Satan can never measure nor grapple with. So that all his efforts turn against him as to God's children. Power in them by the Holy Ghost was not yet manifested, nor they endued with it, for the Lord was not yet risen, nor glorified and His work accepted. Thus, further, as regards the flesh, *i.e.* their state, not natural, but as not yet having received the Holy Ghost, the effect of this sifting time of Satan's power would be shown, and what the flesh was in trial, for they were passing out of the guardianship of the flesh, *i.e.* the guardianship of Christ, the good Shepherd of them

in their then state, just as they were, into conflict with Satan in His absence, by the energy of the Holy Ghost. And now, what the flesh was, and what this condition was into which they were entering, in contrast with His present care, was brought out to their knowledge and so conscience. Hence also he that had most energy in the flesh, forward, devoted and active, full of zealous affection, but confident, he stands foremost to the Lord's eye in the trial. Also the Lord loved him, "Simon, Simon" for He knew what Simon was, "Satan hath desired to have you, to sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee." And here is deep instruction. All were sifted, scandalized at Christ that night, and fled, deserting Him. But he in whom the flesh was strongest, most earnest, and that withal in true affection, was sifted, and what the flesh was most fully proved, and hence the profoundest humiliation of all, and so source of strength to aid and strengthen others, for His strength is made perfect in weakness.

—32. "When once thou hast returned back" (ἐπιστρέψας); see Ps. xix, 7, and xxii, 3, Septuagint.

This the discovery of the flesh, the Holy Ghost not yet given, but in one truly loving the Lord, in Peter at Antioch, and Paul descended from the third heaven—we have it in those who had received the Holy Ghost, and that unchanged. But thus the Lord deals with it when there is confidence in the flesh; He lets it be sifted, and that, if need be, so as to produce a fall, that we may know what it is. But this is not His way but in extreme cases where the seal of the Spirit is given, but in the meantime He intercedes that our faith fail not. He does not take out of the trial which sifts, but

He sustains in it that we may thoroughly know what the flesh is, where our force is, and that His strength is made perfect in weakness. But then there are two ways in which Satan is employed for our good in this respect. First, to prevent the evil, as in Paul, where there is an energetic nature, and the Lord for service has placed us where, by reason of the flesh, this nature is in danger, He counterbalances this by putting weakness and dishonour on the flesh, even externally if need be, *i.e.* letting Satan do it, who loves to torment if he cannot injure the children of God. Thus the flesh is made painful, when it would have been the seat of the action of what was enticing, and danger avoided. It was the case of the thorn in the flesh of Paul.

Also when it is simply the confidence and heady reliance on self, and the gift of the Lord has not been the occasion of stumbling, then Satan, naturally desirous of sifting the servants of the Lord, and dishonouring Christ's Name in them, presents an occasion of stumbling, and the Lord for the good of His creature does not hinder this, and His servant falls, *i.e.* the weakness of what he thought strong is made manifest to his conscience, and he acquires a painful but lastingly profitable experience. Had he heeded the Lord's counsel, it had not been necessary, but if they do not learn of Him they must learn what they are so as to be made distrustful of themselves, and feel the need of learning of and leaning upon Him. Yet, in the yet more patient exercise of His love, for even when His admonitions are despised, as here, He who knows the danger prays for His foolish disciple, and restores him to the consciousness of a love which he had been ashamed to own, but which

therefore surpassed his thoughts, and to which he returned with immensely increased sentiment of its force, tenderness and constancy, and with fruitful shame of reliance on so base a self. Here Satan was not a rod, as in the other case, but as a tempter his work allowed for good. Thus by this deep, and deep-wrought, for it was terrible knowledge of self, and by consequence of our sole resource in God, he who stumbled thus and who knew the weakness and worthlessness of the flesh best, and the grace of God best, was capable by weakness felt and grace, best to strengthen his brethren. Thus the position of the flesh in the conflict with Satan, and Christ withal meanwhile interceding, was brought to light, not here noticing the Holy Ghost, because this did not change the nature of things, but was strength superinduced.

And how was this manifested in leaning wholly on God, as in Jesus, and in us by a clear and full discovery of the perfect evil and ruin of the flesh! "I know that in me." What is the just and due effect of the presence of the Holy Ghost? We are kept in the presence of God. Therein there is a distinct and full discovery by His presence of all that is in our heart, of all that is not of the light. The nature is judged in the presence of God, and by, and in understanding, and so receiving the grace that is in Him, and so we go before men in the grace which has displaced the evil in humbling us because of it. And thus we are humbled and fortified at the same time, and fortified in being humbled we judge ourselves because spiritual; and thus this external humiliation has neither occasion nor necessity, as when the flesh is not humbled it has. So that the effect of the presence of the Holy Ghost is not to falsify

this state of things, but to render the manifestation of it unnecessary. But the nature which would have produced it is judged in its roots, judged in the heart because God is manifested. Thus there is no need that it should be externally manifested to the conscience, so that one has to appeal to Divine knowledge to assert the good or Divine life in us, for the Divine presence and knowledge has been applied to the old man. Thus much for the judgment and manifestation, the contrast of the old man in the hour of the power of darkness. The details show all the contrast of the flesh in Peter with the blessed Lord, with the life of the Spirit. This gives us then the flesh left to the assaults of Satan, not introducing the Holy Ghost which governs, but does not change the realities of this state. It is given us here without that power that we may know what it is. Peter repeats his confidence, and the Lord predicts his fall—warning of no avail when the flesh has confidence in itself.

Then the Lord gives us the effect of this change from the companions of Messiah here, and His servants, witnesses in His absence; as to the circumstances, His earthly temporal guardianship which kept them for this world would be lost. For the preservation of the disciples and then, and the saints now is quite other. Then they were kept for earth—now for heaven. He kept them according to the place and system in which He exercised His power. Then "When I sent you without purse and scrip and sandals, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing." He provided according to His right and power for them here, though not for Himself, but now they were to be left to the difficulties and trials of a world where, the Lord absent, Satan governed and would raise opposition

and alienation of heart around them. They would learn in the world, as regards men, as we say, to shift for themselves. They were left in face of Satan, the Lord absent in heaven, to partake of the suffering occasioned by the power to which He Himself was subjected, for it was to spring up as though He knew not how. They were not now the followers of Messiah among the Jews, and He yet not actually displaced by evil from His right, but the servants of the Lord in a world where the Lord was not, over which He had not yet assumed His power in governance, and where He was not known, though He had made it. They were left to its principles, *i.e.* to the effect of them in their walk. "For," saith the Lord, "this that is written must yet be accomplished in Me." "He was reckoned with the transgressors," "for the things concerning Me have an end;" they are not even in suspense—the will of God must be accomplished in them, and all have its end, for indeed here He was on ground which, though presented to man was impossible with God, man being a sinner. But thus all had an end. Their minds still rest on man's strength, not on Messiah crucified in weakness, and say: "Lord, here are two swords." I do not conceive that in saying, "It is enough," the Lord alluded to the number of the swords, more or less, but to their words, implying that they did not enter into His mind. They said enough to shew that the Lord had no need to say anything more to them about it, and He closes His discourse, for indeed, for the whole Church, He had said all needed, for the time was come for Him to pass through all these things in Spirit first, and then indeed.

The Lord, possessing His soul in patience, goes as He

was wont, acting on the ordinary motives of a life devoted already to God, and, come evil or come good, He could not walk better than to walk always with Him; He was wont to do that. The knowledge of the trouble and sorrow, however deep, changed nothing in this. He walked in the day and did not stumble—not insensible, not unaffected in heart and feeling, on the contrary deeply moved before God, and even before His poor disciples, for at the least there was truth there, but in the simple constancy of One who sought not Himself at all, but to do the will of and glorify Him who sent Him, whose Servant He was, and had made Himself, and the more high and perfect, the more completely and entirely Servant. He passes on His way in holy simplicity; what else had He to do here but to go on in this way? What a blessed example the Lord is here! In vain to say: "Of late the Jews sought to stone thee." A man, as we have said, that walks in the day, does not stumble, and His path and He was the day. His disciples followed Him, ignorant mainly of what was to come, but led by Him and thus far happy, not led intelligently for they were not yet strong enough for that, but led by Him, blessed in being His companions. But it was different from a guidance of the Holy Ghost, because it was not in the intelligence of His ways, but affection through grace and the operation of the Spirit in their hearts, and so led. Being there, His heart, full of instruction from the circumstances He was in, overflows in instruction to His disciples whom He loved. "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Then, though the Lord was to have witnesses and companions of His sorrow according to His love to them, He was to be alone with God. He withdraws to commune with, for

there alone all could be said and told to Him, for it was between Him and His Father. The Lord does not say: "Enter not into sin," for it was not here the question. Satan presents a certain thing to act upon the flesh; we walk in the Spirit, all effect is lost. Is it by insensibility? No! but by superiority. Christ, in the discernment which watching, and so a life run with God gave (in Himself perfectly even as Man) knows by His communion with the Father "All things that should come upon Him," passes through all these things in communion with the Father. He had thoroughly gone through it in communion with Him, seen His will in it, and therefore when the evil came by man, it was not of man at all to Him; man and his doings was an accident in it, which was all that the flesh in us would see (save to murmur against the Lord), He was accomplishing in patience and in peace, a known will of His Father. Thus instead of entering into a temptation, He was in the highest exercise of spirituality, accomplishing the will of God in the most difficult circumstances, and the most perfect submission when it cost everything. In the presence of the opposition of Satan, of his terrifying from the path of obedience, the danger, meeting it in the strength of the flesh, not in the seductions of what is pleasant in life—then it is that watchfulness which realises our position before God, and prayer which communicates its whole operation on our nature to God, introduces us into the will of God in it; and the force of His known will, in obedience to which we are sustained by communion with Him, saves us from entering into temptation. This separating power of Satan from God, the sifting of the enemy, because the circumstances to us then

are the simple occasion of accomplishing a will already known, and so much the more glorious as penible, and not a sifting and discovery of what is in us by the circumstances, for that has already in communion been done before God our Father. Besides, the strength of the Lord is then actually with us. And this is the force to me of: "Lead us not into temptation." It is not: "Lead us not into sin"—nothing so impossible as that our Father which is in heaven should do that; but He can lead us into temptation, *i.e.* to be sifted by the enemy, into the place where the flesh shall be exposed and crucified, when this is needful, because hardness, or lightness, or inattention to His patient warnings has supervened. He can lead us into temptation as the last and forced necessary means of self-knowledge and discipline, and it is great grace that the Lord will take this pains with us, but yet, seeing our weakness and the terribleness of the conflict with the enemy, and the holy fear, which becomes us, of falling, it well becomes us to pray that we may not be cast into this furnace, that the Lord may have no need with His thus humbled child. Satan is ever active, and he has, as it were, certain rights, and vast power now that sin is entered, if the children of God are not watchful to prevent his having occasion (for in the times of sifting a bad conscience tends to drive to despair) and do not walk in communion and dependence.

The flesh in its carelessness and undiscerning blindness meets the trial in distress and uncertainty, or carnal opposition, and falls, and Satan so far has gained his point, though the Lord may restore. If, on the other hand, trial be there, we have this model of our position before God—

not proud heroism which despised the sorrow, the pain, and the danger, but entreaty to be spared the evil, casting itself on God for that, and spreading out its desire before Him in blessed and childlike confidence, which does not fear to tell all its sorrow and its feeling, but perfect submission and a desire that the Father's will, and not his, be done.

The Lord here was thoroughly Man, the Son of Man. Angels, or an Angel from Heaven appeared to Him, waiting on Messiah, strengthening Him. But the conflict of His soul was great. He felt all this, but it urged Him in the sense of what the trial, and terrible moment was, the relinquishment of Israel, of life, of all earthly and living accomplishment of the promises, of the sentence of death upon Him, of being brought into the dust of death, seeing what death was in His eyes before God, for He knew the truth—but all this urged yet more to expose all before God, to wrestle with the Father as to all this death, and "He was heard in that He feared." The effect of this communion with God is to see more clearly the power of evil, and the sorrow. It is felt and realised in the soul in the clearness of Divine light, but in the presence of God this urges to more earnest prayer and supplication with God. And this so as to act on the very body, the human system, for here we see the Lord Jesus in all the distress of a soul pressed and in anguish, the power and darkness of death making its way in, the waters coming in into His soul. He was not merely sorrowful in sympathy, and pressed by the contradiction of sinners, but in anguish Himself; His soul was under the anguish of the pressure of death. Ever Man in this, He was externally and providentially succoured and fortified by an Angel. But while this strengthened

and sustained Him in and for the combat, it did not take Him out of the combat; rather, His human nature being sustained enabled Him to enter more deeply and thoroughly into the combat. In all this, however, He prays "Father." He is in His relation as Son, and speaks in it. It is not the Victim yet before God, but the Sufferer, in Spirit feeling all the depths of the waters He is passing through, but crying out of the depths to His Father. In these circumstances the flesh shrinks from the suffering, and overpowered, and weak, and seeks in stupid and after all heartless (yet from incapability) forgetfulness, refuge from the sense and oppression of the evil. But Christ is here as Man, sustained but feeling as Man—though, as we have said, in the full light of God, to see the evil.

We may remark again here, how Luke omits the detail of circumstances, to present the full moral features of what happened. How near the circumstances often which try to us, to our carelessness, while He said "Pray," &c. "Behold the multitude," it was not now the time for praying but for acting in the Spirit realised through prayer, obtained from on high, and acting in us the operation of the presence of God. What calmness and perfection in Jesus as Man! The Holy Ghost does not give us here what the dignity of the Son of God, the Good Shepherd guarding and putting Himself in front of His sheep produced, the Divine nature which had shut the bounds at Sinai, breaking forth to shew that it was His will, not theirs, which allowed, ordered, or bore with all that was done, and let the sheep go in peace. It is the Man in agony before His Father, in calmness and peace before man, sensible to the full as Man of all the

circumstances, but calm in them all. Force and treachery here united to overwhelm the soul of Jesus, but He had passed through it already in much deeper reality with His Father, and He calmly and touchingly notices the act of treachery, unparallelled and wily, and hardness ("Good for that man, had he never been born") with which the unhappy man kissed Him with whom he had walked, and whom now in sacrilegious hardness he betrayed. He betrays the Son of Man, his Companion, and his familiar Friend, for so, *i.e.* Son of Man, the Lord calls Himself here.

The human zeal and feeling of His disciples awoke here, and they demand if they should contend, and one of them strikes the servant of the High Priest, and smote off his ear in hasty zeal. This, permitted of the Lord to shew that it was no want of power in Jesus, gives occasion to His answer, and the manifestation of the same calmness in grace as in patience. Divine in all things, He possessed His soul, perfectly submitted, but the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. "Suffer" says the Lord "thus far," and then He healed the servant, for, come in blessing, the wickedness, nor the hatred of man did not change His grace. He was not to contend as Man; peradventure, afterwards, grace brought this poor servant to know Him whom he had helped to take in his blindness. However that might be, the Lord went on in His course of patience and grace. His power and His mercy unshortened, but His walk, obedience and submission in grace. The Lord then, in reply to the violence of the chief priests, and officers, and elders, states the real case as to that also. "Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves? I was daily with you in the temple, and ye laid no hands upon me." Why not

then? What position of conscience were they in? Was He more, as a Man, in their power now? "But this is your hour and the power of darkness." In full knowledge of what it was, the Lord, explaining their awful position, submits to the will of God by their hardened heart and relentless purpose of evil. But "they took Him and led Him away." It was the hour—so ordained—of darkness, and therefore they were in power. Awful truth! And the Lord as a Lamb for the slaughter, submits because it was His Father's will. He, not the Jews, had given Him the cup; it might be judgment on the hand that brought it to be the instrument of such, but otherwise that made no difference. If it was the hour of darkness, He was the Light and walked as the Light. Though to suffer all things, Himself in conduct shone only brighter, but it was perfect darkness all around, not the shining of the light actively on others, but the perfect walking in it when all was the essence of darkness (even His disciples under its influence or terror) proving who He was. It was in Himself, not in others.

Then we come to the conduct of Peter, for all now are left to themselves below, though not deserted of God, but left to the effect of circumstances on their way and thoughts, for Jesus, shut up into His own obedience and pure suffering, is not here a leader of others by light, and power, and keeping, but a Sufferer Himself, perfect in all. We have still to observe in Jesus this perfect calmness and self-possessedness. No trial produced that dismay of spirit which disables the perfect and simple action of grace, and what each moment requires. When the cock crows the Lord looks on Peter. As the flesh had hurried Peter

there, so the Lord recalls his position to his conscience, in thus looking at him, and, poor Simon, his boasted strength now tried, but, after all, his heart right with God, goes out and weeps bitterly. There the blessed Lord then spent the night; not before His judges—they took their ease till morning, to judge the Lord, the Creator, the Lord of Glory; and Jesus was the object of the insults and injuries of the men whom they employed. But: "As a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers," He was dumb and opened not His mouth. This was the reckless amusement of the human heart. The plans of Satan came after, though doubtless this also was his malice. The Lord had finished His testimony. He had already, after His communion with the Father, declared what this hour was. He was, and was content, yea, His joy in obedience, to suffer and obey in it. In what perfect grace!

—40—46. Note the warning of the Lord bears the stamp of what He was passing through faithfully. He urges to watch and pray; He was doing it. And so afterwards, with the increased sense of it. "Why sleep ye? Rise up and pray." But further, I would note the faithful watching and praying of the saint keeps him safe from the temptation, *i.e.* the power of God in answer to it. We know not what is coming, though some temptations may be anticipated. The last thing we thought of, Peter never would have supposed the question of a little maid where all seemed easy and a friend had brought him in, was the danger to be apprehended in that night of violence. But with God temptation has not this character. The quiet path of obedience is before us. Who so calm as Jesus when Judas came? Our prayer, through grace, is to produce this,

but if not, Christ's prayer for us meets the truth, and need of our case exactly. Satan, though there are special moments of trial, is an ever active enemy: "Satan hath desired." Had Peter been less confident, and looked to the Lord, Satan would not have had him at all. We are always the subjects of this mighty spiritual conflict, and when flesh is not put down and God present, Satan can touch us; the temptation is felt, we fall into it. Watching and prayer, before the temptation, keep us clear. Christ's intercession fits itself to our actual state. Satan would sift; He does not pray he might not. Peter wanted it; so do we often, all. If I am with God about it all goes well; at the utmost, the chaff is sifted away, the bands burned in the fire, but the smell of fire does not pass on our clothes. The devil's fire, in God's hands, burns the devil's bands. So with Job. But He prayed that, when failure had come through Satan's sifting and Peter's want of prayer, faith, confidence in the heart of Christ and of God might not fail. Thus he learned weakness and incapacity of standing, and that Christ's grace met all, and, the worst of cases, he could strengthen his brethren. There is an active desire and purpose of Satan; he was to sift the Lord—he had nothing in Him; the flesh is in us. If we are with God by the Spirit actively watching and praying, it is, when needed, judged there, and the wicked touches us not as born of God. We do not so, we are sifted, nor does, where needed, Christ ask we should not be, but in His intercession demands the exactly fitted process, and the maintenance of a conscious link with Himself. He looks at the right moment, then it is with Him we have to say, and He goes on with Divine wisdom to deal with the root that

bore the outward sin, and to which some other inward one had exposed us, which was not judged before. Warning, watching and prayer is the path of security—but, if humbled, it is a blessed thing to know that Christ's prayer for us, though not sparing the needed humiliation, is put up when we have not prayed ourselves. Had Christ been their only Object, they would have watched, and been led to pray in that dark hour. Feeling their own sorrow, they cannot bear it, and are overpowered, and sleep is their resource ; the rest fly. Sorrowful enough ! But boasting Peter must learn a sadder tale of the self he too much trusted. The place of our prayer is thus learnt. It is previous watchfulness with Christ when the temptation is not there ; its fruit, the temptation, is not at all entered into when it is, and the extreme goodness and mercy of Christ which suits itself to the exact circumstances of the case.

—41. *et seq.* It is striking that Luke gives more conflict and anguish in Gethsemane than Matthew and Mark, but less, indeed none, on the Cross. It is not, as John, the peaceful dignity and majesty of the Son of God, the Divine Person, in contrast with the suffering Son of Man. That is not Luke. He is more simply Man, in Luke, in Gethsemane, and, on the Cross, the introduction of the new estate of things ; hence its efficacy. In Matthew and Mark, He prays the cup may pass, sorrowful unto death, and bows to His Father's will. In Luke He is in conflict, praying more earnestly, and there is seen an Angel from heaven strengthening Him. His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling on the ground. But on the Cross He is as Man, by faith on the other hand above the sufferings, and enters into the present going of His Spirit to heaven. He comforts

the thief with this, not to wait for the Kingdom; He cries with a loud voice, but the utterance is not, as in Matthew and Mark, recorded, and commends His own Spirit to His Father. It is not "He gave up" (παρέδωκε) it is simply human "He expired" (ἐξέπνευσε), but in perfect faith, in death He commends His Spirit, to His Father. In Matthew and Mark we have the cup as sorrow and suffering; He prays it may pass, which is more fully given than in Luke where we have merely the fact, and praying more earnestly, and we see that cup drunk on the Cross in the utterance there. This was to be, and must be; and so it is shewn us. It was His work of which He felt all the weightiness anticipatively in Gethsemane, actually on the Cross. In Luke He is the perfect Man feeling, as such, in Gethsemane "in conflict;" praying earnestly, and strengthened, feeling, as we ought to, beforehand with God, the sorrows and sufferings which are before us, and, in them, exercising perfect faith with God.

He is subject to God's hand in Matthew and Mark. He is the perfect Man in Luke, the Divine Person in John. How blessed it is to have all His characters, though our feeble hearts have to trace them apart thus! The whole path of Christ, from the time of Pilate's condemnation of Him, will be found to have this character in Luke. It is there He tells the daughters of Jerusalem not to weep for Him, there He says: "Father, forgive them." Note, we have not in Luke the first examination of the Lord when He was brought in.

I return for a moment to Luke, in Gethsemane and on the Cross. We see Him truly a Man in Gethsemane, in Luke, perfectly a Man anticipating what was coming on

Him, and bowing to His Father's will in it, looking wholly to Him in the anticipation of the sorrow. It was perfectness as a Man, the cup fully felt anticipatively, *i.e.* in His mind (and we know how this works in us) but, in that sense of it, looking to God, as we ought, and submission to His will. On the Cross, in the suffering, He looks out of it. He had passed through it in Spirit with God, and His perfectness as Man is here displayed in so looking out of it, and, having the mind of God, free to possess and express it to others. This does not touch the fact of His feeling the drinking the cup of wrath as such, but the expression of His sense of that is not inserted by Luke. And as a human Sufferer His faith is perfect. It is not "He gave up" (παρέδωκε) but: "Into Thy hands I commit my spirit." Sonship, but Man trusting in God. Perfect, He did not enter into the temptation, but obeyed His Father, knowing it was His will. And, perfect in the suffering, in His faith (I do not speak of Atonement) He looks out of it, and the time of His death being come, commends His Spirit to God.

I do not think that the Angels in Matthew iv. are quite the same thought as the Angel, in Luke, in Gethsemane. After His victory in the wilderness, Angels (ascending and descending on the Son of Man) come as attesting indeed His manhood, but as attesting also His claim to their service. He had been tried, faithful, in that left to Himself as far as such ministry went. Victorious, they come and render to Him the just tribute of their service. In Luke, One comes, in the time of His trial, to strengthen Him. The fact of Angel service, now to man (according to John i.) is the same; but here He is the weak, distressed Man, strengthened by an Angel when the trial pressed so

terribly upon Him. But how wonderful the truth! How perfect the grace of His being so! Of the Lord's humanity! What scenes are the wilderness and Gethsemane for the Son of God! How truly He is become a Man! See, in Mark too, how "The angels ministered to him," comes in as a title contrasted with trial.

I think too in Luke, I have justly thought the temptations are arranged in a spiritual order, mere flesh (hunger) the world, and promises, Satan changing himself into an angel of light. In Matthew there is more than historical order, as heretofore noticed. It is, in a certain sense, dispensational, or refers to the place He takes. First, simply Man, hunger, His refusal, as Man, to take a step, or have a thought or a will without God. Man lives by every word out of His mouth, dependence and obedience. The next is Israel, promise to the Remnant, and in fact the Messiah. The Lord answers, not by what is said of man but of Israel: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." In all He carefully keeps the place of Man in obedience, but in Israelite—was not to try if God would be as good as His word. So Deut. vi. In the last He is Son of Man, to reign over the nations. Here Satan is obliged to shew himself. Was the Son of Man to be as unfaithful to God as the first Adam, or keep His place as Man owning God? Was He to take the world as Man by the passions and lusts on which Satan acts, and avoid the Cross?—in a word, under Satan, where man and, as a present scene of lusts, the powers of the world, were? But still "It is written" suffices, only Satan is detected, rejected, and dismissed. Born of a woman, Son of Man in nature and derivation, though miraculously, a Man, born

under the law, as Messiah, and Son of Man with the title to all things in a new position, only now in tested obedience, and so the place to be won, though His as Son of God, ever perfect, though here to prove it in trial, only not here going beyond the earth. All the Lord's answers are from Deuteronomy ; and this is quite suited.

Up to the end of Numbers, we have, speaking of Israel, the patterns of things in the heavens, and though we have surely a Divinely given history of what occurred to Israel, yet the accounts of the Tabernacle are shadows of good things to come, not history. Sacrifices were "to be offered," so and so—not "were offered." Priests "to do" so and so—not "they did." I am not aware of the statement of a single sacrifice after Sinai, unless one Passover, and that indeed was at Sinai, and where even it is history, as specially in Exodus at the beginning, and Numbers. They happened unto them for types, and were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come. Deuteronomy, on the contrary, gives the conditional, historical possession of the Land, and directions for Israel's conduct in it, and, even after the warnings, the secret things of faith. It was the actual directory in the Land, in the state in which Israel found themselves when they entered. It was the actual, responsible, and conditional terms of possession of the Land, given indeed when they were not in it, and which do not suppose their final possession in purpose, but looking to obedience in order to their keeping it, and referring to their conduct in the desert as warning (see Deut. vi.) given just at the point when they had passed through the Wilderness, and were going into the Land, stating the turning point of blessing and cursing. And so

with Jesus, it was the testing time personally, till He came to take the curse of a broken law, which was another thing. Then He was a Propitiation for Israel's sins, and also for the whole world. Here tempted as Man, and also as Messiah. In the last temptation, the whole question of allegiance as Head of the world was brought out. Satan takes power used in will as Man if Son of God, and promise in Israel, and the world of glory over the nations. Christ takes ever the lowly place of obedience in the place He was in, as in Israel, for God had set Him there. This is blessedly perfect. The authority of the Word over us as to our walk precedes promises, and glory to us, for that sets God in His place, *i.e.* the first with us.

What deep pain Peter's denial must have been here to the Lord! It was not only treacherous and well-known Judas, but beloved Peter. Here too remark the difference. All were, as it were, left to themselves. It was not, as Judas, the direct power of Satan in them. Satan entered into him, and thus acted by him; here, not being directly kept of God, they were left to the natural fruits of their own heart, when the circumstances directed of Satan, so allowed of God, presented the temptation to their corrupt or feeble nature.

—66. As it stands: "To their own council." When the convenience of their hour suited them, they assembled in their own council, *i.e.* (if so to be read, apart from the Romans, and so probably, certainly in sense, for the guilt was to be their own) in the chief priest's house, and by their own council, apart, Jesus, Messiah, the Lord was to be delivered up by the nation. We have still to remark how Luke seizes the great moral circumstances, for there is

abundance of detail in all this part entirely omitted, but all the moral and Jewish, in contrast with Gentile characteristics are thereby brought out more to light. But the Lord knew it was the time to be delivered up, that it was their hour, not the time of testimony, and He left them to their own wickedness. "If I tell you, ye will not believe." In the time of testimony to conscience, testimony was ample. Now they were the accomplishers of a plot to destroy Him through jealousy. "If I should ask, ye will not answer me at all, nor let me go." The Lord in truth judges their state.

—69. "Henceforth," not "Hereafter."

—70. The presenting of Messiah to the Jews (blinded by their leaders) was finished. From this the Son of Man was to be seated at the right hand of God. The whole Jewish Sanhedrin: "They all said," identified "the Son of Man" as declared to be henceforth "sitting on the right hand of the power of God" with "the Son of God." "Thou then art the Son of God?"

The Lord gives them the great general revelation of the counsel of God, which in fact rendered answer unnecessary, and judged their position. All was settled with God. They could go on. Here the Sanhedrin thought they had found an opportunity, though the testimony was very general, of making Him commit Himself, for they judged after man, and they say: "Thou then art the Son of God?" Truth it was, and the other, true also of Jesus, implied it, though He had merely stated the counsel of God without applying it to itself. The Lord had nothing to conceal, nay, He must be condemned for the truth because He was the Truth, and they be guilty of reject-

ing the Son of God because He was such, and spake the truth, and they were of him who was the father of a lie. They must be guilty, not of mistake but of condemning Him because He was the Son of God and bore witness, as He should do, before God of the truth. Yet here it was no testimony offered them on His part, but He conceals nothing. "Ye say that I am." This was enough; the full truth had only to be told for them to reject it. They themselves (and as judges they condemn themselves utterly) had heard the truth, the glory of His Person from the mouth of Truth (so they say) "We ourselves have heard from His own mouth," and they reject it. It was complete, final—they could not go further —they, judges, reject Messiah, the Son of God bearing witness (as they said, though He had but assented to their demand) to the truth because He did so. They had now only to complete their iniquity in leading, as religious iniquity ever does, the world to finish the wickedness, to accomplish its guilt. The civil power must give in to the perfect and wilful moral evil of an apostate people, of professed servants of God. This is the history of the world, for religious iniquity is always nearest to Satan.

The Lord answers nothing at all to the question as to Messiah, for the mission as such was ended, and would have been to them in the flesh, not to His danger. Perhaps they might have been content to get Him on their side, as such, on His own avowal; and the testimony would have been wholly misplaced, for Israel was incapable utterly of her Messiah. But to His personal glory He could not refuse confession, for that claimed, and necessarily the truth and their recognition, though it was

base condemnation. It was not a relative office, but the sure, necessary, and everlasting dignity of His Person in relation with the Father—this He must own, or not tell the truth. But when they could not condemn Him for saying He was Messiah, of which Israel was incapable under the Gentiles, and in sin so as to continue, they could equally accuse Him on this ground to the Gentile power, and seek its favour, and secure their object by this double accomplishment of their apostasy.

Chapter XXIII.

—4. It was needful He should suffer under Pilate for many reasons, but it was needful He should suffer not by his but their rejection and condemnation.

—5. The change from τὸ ἔθνος (the nation, in verse 2) to τὸν λαὸν (the people, here) opens to us the spirit and mind of their conduct.

What a continued picture of all that is in man's heart, and all his ways as brought out in this wondrous scene, and the moral force of all his relationship with God, is given us in this Gospel! The iniquity of the Chief priests was manifest in their accusation, calculated to arouse the jealousy of the governor, and charging on Christ what was entirely contrary to the truth as to the tribute, but mixed up with a ground work which they knew, reckoning on His truth, Jesus could not deny, but which thus proved their consummate and hardened wickedness. The Evangelist then gives us, by the Spirit, His good confession before Pontius Pilate; and Pontius Pilate, that the guilt of the Jews might be complete, and that also of the civil

power among the Gentiles, declares that he finds no fault in Him—testimony rendered in spite of themselves by the authority appointed of God. Thus, briefly, the great points of principle are given by the Evangelist. The Jews persist in their iniquity, saying: "He stirreth up the people," acting on the jealousy of a known government of a known people.

But there was another form of evil and authority to be introduced—the apostate king of apostate Israel, and in this rejection of Jesus all are friends, however jealous and divided. Here Christ answers nothing, for He recognizes not Herod though He had done nothing in derogation of his authority. Being yet in confession and testimony He had specially to do with the Gentile authority ordained of God as head of the fourth beast, and the high priests head of the nation to which He came, and while authorities are agreed and recognize each other, and make compliments of man in delivering up Jesus, yet the providence of God provides that the act should entirely lie between Rome and the Jewish people, the terrible union between the fourth beast and God's external people here below. The question as to the Christ lay really on them as responsible, He not yet assuming the power because of the glory of the Father, and the work He had to do (accomplish). Yet though the guilt of authority, failure in protecting the innocent, and unrighteous judgment rested with the Gentiles, yet the activity of an evil will was with the religious part of the Jews. Pilate and Herod please one another, and Pilate the Jews. Both agree, as the Jews knew that He was entirely innocent. Pilate even attempts, by taking advantage of a customary favour done to please the Jews,

to get rid of the question, satisfying their malice by scourging Him, but never persevered in righteousness. The sincerity of the Jews was manifested by the choice they made of the prisoner to be delivered—evil under the eyes even of the governor. The Evangelist, yea, the Holy Ghost is careful to mark that the voices of the people and of the Chief priests, who had "stirred them up," prevailed, and he delivered Jesus to their demand. Nothing can be clearer and more plain than the judgment of the Jews here, the judgment of this unhappy people. Three times the opportunity of a relenting voice was given, and while the evil of the governor was plain. But the Lord thus righteously put them in the place of judgment; every time their cry increased in ardour and fierceness for the rejection, the death of Messiah. It was a terrible moment in the eyes of God, "the power of darkness;" but what a saying of God's people "their hour"! Pilate therefore released the guilty Barabbas, whom they desired, to appease and please the people, and delivered Jesus "to their will." Iniquity enough as judge, but still we hear "to their will."

It is remarkable how the Evangelist insists here on the guilt of the people. Peter, in his preaching to the people, insists on the same point, taking only, by the Holy Ghost, infinite grace, the intercession of Jesus on the Cross, as the ground of God's yet relationship with the people. Also Luke omits all mention of Gentile violence of the soldiers or others, and, though guilty, presents Pilate at least as not doing it of perverse will. Yet it is the moral evil which is most put forward here, for their position as to dispensation is much more strongly marked in John; see chap. xix.

—26. I suppose that Jesus, that, to man, "root out of a dry ground," "a man of sorrows and acquainted with

grief," was ill-calculated to carry His cross—a weightier Cross lay upon Him—and those who led Him away (for it was a moment of all violence) could lay hold on any one they met to help them in their iniquity. The great blow of man's hideous iniquity was now struck, and Jews and Gentiles fell into the same mass of rejection, and insulters of Messiah; only the Jews were so with more knowledge, but they all fell into the same mass in judgment. Privileges, or at least the forms of them, became sorrows and terror, for they must be broken down and laid low, for all was untrue now. If they did these things in the green tree, what must be done in the dry? Natural affection, the natural feelings touched by affecting circumstances, changed nothing of this. They wept with a conscience unaffected; they understood not the ruin which awaited them. The Lord, in calm and holy concern for them, at least not stranger to their position as daughters of Jerusalem, says to them: "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep over me, but weep over yourselves and your children." One may be affected with compassion, as if one was superior to Christ, and fall under the judgment consequent on His rejection, and such the case if not subjected to Him in His glory, and really companion of His humiliation, as dependent on His grace. No humiliation of the Lord put Him out of His place of perfect capability of dealing with others, all others, from God. Then Israel, or the Jews who had rejected Him should cry in vain for something to hide them, for if He, the living and true Vine, who indeed bore fruit to God, was thus dealt with, what the lot of the fruitless and unprofitable, whose end was to be burned, for so they were as branches?

—31. Luke's use of the 3rd person plural for existence of the fact I apprehend. "Shall be done" is not in Greek opposed as passive; it is γένηται (may take place).

—33. It appears to me that all occupied here are confounded, Jews and Gentiles. Yet the expression is rather what presents to us Jesus Himself than the others. These poor Gentile soldiers, utterly ignorant of what they were doing, were the object of the compassion of Him who, as we have seen, never lost His thought for others in the midst of the deep waters which overwhelmed Himself. For man, in his awful ignorance, Jesus and the malefactors were all together; but the heart of Jesus turned in grace over those who put them there, and separated, by the revelation of Himself in grace, between them with whom He was thus undistinguishedly associated by man—by man whom He had made. Here certainly the Gentiles hold the primary place. "The world was made by Him and the world knew Him not."

—35. We have "The people stood beholding, and the rulers with them sneered." These not only do the same, but had pleasure in them that did it—could use the ignorance of the Gentile to accomplish the advised iniquity of their hearts. With what grace does the Holy Ghost by Peter, yet in mercy, address them, saying, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it," etc.! And not till Israel resisted the Holy Ghost, as well as betrayed and rejected the Son of Man, is the judgment finally pronounced upon them. They were guilty in the 10,000 talents by the death of Jesus, but this was passed by until they refused the testimony and principle of grace, "Forbidding to preach to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway," and so wrath came upon them to the uttermost.

Now they mock the Saviour for His perfect obedience and perfect all-submissive love. For this the Saviour should undergo, have no approbation, but simply do the will of God, and find His reward elsewhere; terrible for man, and just the trial of perfect, abstractedly perfect obedience, also of love. The more He loved, the less He was loved. But He obeyed and loved, not for the acceptance or approval of man, but to please God, and because His love was perfect, according to and of God. Thus, in the darkness, the perfect darkness, His perfection shewn.

"He saved others" is a dark trait of deepest malignity and condemnation. It was pure malice, for even here they owned His works. They did not care to deny them now for the moment, but only to shew the perfect evil of their hearts. They could say, "Ah, so would we have it," not in evil that the Lord had done but in evil that they had accomplished, for they loved evil—sad slavery and bondage to Satan the father of all this! They were entirely under his power, the expression of his will and ways. Yet blinded in their malice, for, owning the fact "He saved others," they do not recognize Him as the Christ, the Chosen of God, for then they should have expressly condemned themselves, and been humbled, having crucified their Messiah, their own Glory, and Hope, and Triumph, as they will own yet, hereafter. But the malice of the heart, of Satan, is always entirely blind. The soldiers joining the Jews in fact in their insults, and looking merely on the question of secular power, say: "If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself." They are merely on the outside of the evil, and witness publicly the fall of the people *(lo chesed)* the now ungodly people. The Jews, their own

destroyers, they were entirely without force, because without the Lord, for indeed the King of the Jews (but through His grace, for no man could take it from Him—He laid it down of Himself) was there rejected, crucified, and for death, entirely so as regarded the people of Israel, as then before God who judged His people in the world. Such is the folly of man! This accordingly was the inscription written, so as to be read by all, "This is the King of the Jews." The nation was judged in this; they had brought it about. But while the counsel of God was fulfilled, He was King of the Jews, and what was the nation when their King (the green tree among them) was hung as a slave? The pith and force of the expression is not that "This is Jesus," but "This is the King of the Jews." Unhappy nation! They were gone for ever, but by grace.

It is remarkable how this taunt, bitter and trying, but indeed revealing the perfect egoism of the human heart, is repeated by all, "Save Thyself." To have power, and not use it to save oneself was inconceivable to man's mind; selfishness in the thief could add "and us" to the taunt. But the Jews, "If he be the Christ, let him save himself": in insult to the Jews as to Him "If Thou art King of the Jews, save Thyself," and the thief, as the Jews, all unite in this—but the love of Jesus above, unabated—He did not come to save Himself. He could have saved Himself, but then not others, not have accomplished the perfect and adorable will of His blessed Father. What an interest the Spirit of God takes in all these circumstances, as in Pss. lxix. and xxii.! Though thus oppressed and smitten, His adversaries were all before Jehovah. But God had prepared, even here, the consolations of grace for Jesus, in a poor

sinner who found the balm of his soul just in this sorrow, that Jesus, was there with him on the accursed tree. He was there to own, honour, and, we may say, pour balm into the heart where alone he found it, for the joy of the operation of grace in the heart is balm to Him who suffers that it may be so. And indeed Jesus, to convey full truth and comfort to the poor thief, must also speak comfort to Himself, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Thus did this poor sinner minister comfort to the Lord.

Also we have another example how the Lord, whatever His circumstances, whatever His trial, was always perfectly centred in Divine patience before God, and was in the calmness of love according to the need of those who were before Him. In these two thieves we have an extraordinary example of the heart of man without, and under the operation of grace. No sorrow, no shame, no disgrace, no suffering brings the heart too low to scorn Jesus, or touches the hardness which rejects and despises Him. He is the off-scouring of all things, a gibbetted thief can despise Him, and He has no word to reply. On the other hand, we have the evidence how in the midst of manifested iniquity, the grace of God produces fruits and manifestation of faith to His glory, which shine through the very darkest circumstances when even the known companions of Jesus were all sunk in their shade. The scene around was all dark, but on the Cross itself there was a scene apart and one more intimate where God's ways, man's heart, and Jesus as the great Object in which these were manifested, were all, and now in their first fruits, fully brought out. For in this poor thief—first fruits of the Cross—we see a good for an honest conscience fully in the light, and which therefore, in the

full confession of, can fully rebuke sin, and that because of the fear of God. For such is the case when the thought of the presence of God—as where it exists it does and must—predominates entirely, the conscience is astonished at the possibility of sin there, *i.e.*, anywhere, because it has realised the truth in the fear of God, and looks at circumstances as judged by a conscience in His presence. "Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?" Can you mock at your own position in another (the human heart can do anything) and when we indeed are here justly? For the judgment of sin in another, in righteousness, is by the sense of the evil of sin in our own conscience, and, therefore is humble though firm. It is as to both the conscience which is in activity in the presence of God.

Further there was the spiritual intelligence, on the other hand, with the full honest confession of sin and guilt, of the perfectness and sinlessness of Christ as Man. He knew Jesus. This is an immense fact in the state and confession of this man's heart; further, contrary to all possible appearance to the flesh. When all denied Him, he only sees, owns, and confesses Him "Lord." At the same time his whole concern and anxiety, in the certainty that Christ would come in His Kingdom, confiding in His love, was that this despised Malefactor would remember him. Present sufferings, shame, Jesus' reproach, all gave way before this desire to be owned then of One whom he only now knew, save the Father who would glorify Him with a yet better glory. To this hope of future excellence and glory, the Lord replies by the certainty of present salvation. Jesus, honoured and sustained, comforted by his confession

rejoices in this companion into the peace before Him, and reassures his heart with better things than even he anticipated. Thus this scene, which let in the light which was beyond, through the portal of this poor sinner's heart, whose need touched of grace, opened necessarily the resources and counsels of Divine love. Cloud, and the darkness proper to the hour resumed, and even by the providence of God outwardly, its wonted and now suited and recognized course. But this, it seems to me, hung specially over Israel when the earth was in relation with the Lord there. Its utter darkness, and the entire hiding of His face from it was manifested—the sun being darkened—but then it was that, judgment and darkness hanging over the earth, the way into the Holiest, by the act which had its place in this darkness, was fully opened, and God, in the grace of Christ's sacrifice and supreme love, shone forth upon the world. At least, all that hid Him was broken through. It was the darkness of judgment to one, but it was the breaking through of light, and access opened to the Holiest by the death of Christ to those without. The companions of Jesus had the way into the Holiest opened by the rending of His flesh, the Veil. All was thus now finished, and the Lord with no infirm or hesitating language which failed of its point, but crying with a loud voice, "Father" (for His soul was now returned into its communion, all being accomplished) "Into Thy hands I commend My spirit." And having said this He expired.

—46. We have a remarkable case of the article in the blessed Lord's words here, "Into Thy hands I commit my spirit" (εἰς χεῖράς σου παρατίθεμαι τὸ πνεῦμά μου). It is

very unusual Greek to have the possessive pronoun without the article. It may, no doubt, be from the Hebrew which has none in such case, *b'yad-kha* (into Thy hand); but in Greek we must take πάτερ εἰς χεῖρας, as one word, so to speak. To commit to these, it would be right as only characteristic; σοῦ (Thy) comes in by the by, not necessarily, through "hands" (χεῖρας) being there; but this is all right for the sense. "Hands" (χεῖρας) has no individuality, here is no object before the mind. He commits Himself to Another, His Father's hands, so to speak. It is far more significant than "My spirit" (τὸ πνεῦμά μου); here we have the article, because, while the regular form, His spirit was the positive object He was so committing to His Father's safe keeping.

Note, Luke does not give the cup of wrath on the Cross —that is specially Matthew—Luke more the circumstances, and the faithful path of the Son of Man, the Saviour. He is above the circumstances in faith, truly Man; see xxii, 43, 44, xxiii. 46. In John He is above them in Person. In Matthew, God's sword has awoken against His Fellow.

We find in the Gospels, not the comment of the Holy Spirit on the counsels of God in the death of Jesus, but the circumstances and relations in which He, as a Man, found Himself on earth. In Matthew, we find the Sufferer of Ps. xxii., and also of Ps. lxix. He should have been King of Israel, and owned as such, is despised of Gentiles who cast lots for His garments, and abandoned of God, and declares it. Here the circumstances are, in a sense, less marked but perhaps more important. It is the Man rejected. The Jews, and all that concerned them, set aside in their relationship with God (in the Person of their

King, the Just One) and He, the veil being rent which enclosed the Holiest of all, to become the Head and Recipient of power for a new family of blessing, heavenly blessing as risen and glorified. All that is marked therefore is "darkness over all the Land." The Creation, and the Jewish polity creation under the trial (possibility) of blessing by Law cast into darkness, and the veil of the Temple, the centre of their polity, and the exclusive concealment of God amongst them, rent in the midst. Then Jesus, this being so, marks its power in His death, and gives His Spirit into His Father's hand. This was not Jewish blessing, for "The living, the living, they shall praise Thee." But it was much higher; it was Sonship, death overcome, and the occasion merely of presenting the Spirit, happy, safe, confident notwithstanding death, into the Father's care and presence. This was an immense triumph, and struck a blow at death, in the Person of Him who must have been blessed in it, which death could never recover. Having laid hold of Him, it necessarily therein lost its power, for in death His Spirit necessarily went to the Father. In truth this word "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit" is (short of resurrection) of the highest possible importance, for indeed it is identified with death, but with death in the hands of Jesus. What a word! And what a fact! What a centre of all truth, of the mystery of good and evil, of the centre of its power, and Divine power, yet in perfect submission, or, at least, Divine life introduced into the midst of it! But then the resurrection passes clean beyond it, and is Divine power producing its effect beyond, and leaving death, and its region and effects, entirely behind. As it is written:

"Determined Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead"; and surely we should be victorious, in the power of this life, over mortified evil, reckoning ourselves dead.

But the Divine life in Man passes here scathless through the power of evil and death, because free from all evil, because it had never been sullied by defilement, because the prince of this world had nothing in Him. Hence also, in speaking of the resurrection, as to the Lord Jesus, He says: "According to the Spirit of holiness." "He that is born of God sinneth not, but keepeth himself . . . and the wicked one toucheth him not." But the flesh is ever evil; it is of the old man, and perishes, or is changed, but the life of Christ can make it silent, as hereafter change it altogether. How few are really engaged in active evil, but how little virtue to resist!

"The people looked on, and the rulers with them mocked"; and here a large mass, for the crowds were ever distinct from the Jews. Nothing is ever so wicked as fallen, and therefore proud religion. What scenes will be disclosed in the latter day! "The crowds, seeing what took place, beating their breasts, return." They were come to that sight, were astonished, amazed, and returned—"These crowds who had come together"—for indeed this is a marvellous scene. The effect of this great event (how things are perverted! for what is man unsustained?) the centurion, there in the course of duty, struck by Divine mercy, at least in the conviction of his natural conscience, "Glorified God, saying: In very deed this Man was just." What happened acted on his natural conscience. The masses are troubled (they had no part in the affair, and

augur no good) and go away. Those that knew Him more humanly, personally interested, but more intimidated therefore, stood afar off, and the women, that had followed Him from Galilee, were there looking on.

But this: "I commit my spirit" was a supreme act of faith in the Lord Jesus. It took its power from, and gave its character to death to us, for, while in all cases it passed the sentence of ruin on whatever stood in the place of the first Adam and all his living irremediable ruin, to which Jesus in infinite grace to us, and that His Father might be perfectly glorified in the full manifestation of this ruin, in righteous judgment, yet in His righteousness, obedience, and perfect expiation for us, and perfectness in faith in God His Father whatever weight and terror of death lay upon Him, and He entered into all the depths of it, and though this blow came from above, and to Him with the full sense that it came from above: "Thou hast brought me into the dust of death," yet He commends His Spirit in death to Him, to His Father, although death, the judgment of God, still rested on Him as to the fact externally. But, the expiation made, its natural horror was gone to faith, because the conscience unburdened, and Jesus bearing sin was more than that, the Father in love could be trusted in not to hinder, and to restore, but notwithstanding in the certainty of His love, for communion was restored, to guard and deal with that which was separated and dissolved—what had suffered, but which had perfectly glorified Him. As Jesus commended His Spirit to His Father leaving His body, part of a world He left behind Him condemned and rejected, for He placed Himself in all its circumstances, (only His Spirit went on

to His Father beyond it) yet indeed the providence and operation of God provided for this also, and as He was sinless, even as to the flesh, God, the righteous Judge, would not suffer His Holy One to see corruption. Also, now the suffering and expiation being made, He is to be with the rich in His death.

That the lesson of our condition may be complete, the most faithful are sometimes set aside, and others feeble in faith, scarce owned, or even putting themselves forward as Christians, are found active and faithful in the post of danger, confession, and attachment to the Lord. And often too it is the difficulties, which frighten others, which force them forward. I have already noticed that then also (while perfect disgrace as trial) honour was to be put on the Lord, God having prepared this little Remnant of the honourable among the people for this, even He who orders all things, the end from the beginning. There is a moral righteousness in awaiting the Kingdom of God, a righteous, humbled sense of evil around, and dependence at least on God. There may be fulness of faith for the present accomplishment of service, or realisation of His power here below, but there is moral rectitude which the Lord can and does own, though man can scarce perhaps perceive it. It is not all. It is not power. It is not the manifestation which the Holy Ghost operates. It does not consent to the evil, and is bold as respected, even more than the others with the authority where need is, by the Divine help for good. Were they more right than the disciples who discovered their weakness? Far from it. These became the witnesses and Apostles of the Lord by the Holy Ghost, who had been with Him from the

beginning. But the Holy Ghost has been willing to give us the example and sample even of these. At least the Saviour was honoured, for His time of trial was perfected and closed, and that was all that was needed, for honour was, and was now specially, His due. The women, in true but ignorant affection, make useless preparation, awaiting the just Jewish time, for a risen Lord who had passed far beyond their faith; and the Jewish commandments which restrained them, restrained them that the will of God might be accomplished. Yet here, with ignorance and measure of unbelief, for they had heard Him reveal His death and resurrection, it was their true faith acting in the affections which rejected and left aside every conviction of fear, danger, impossibility or what not, respected the Law, which was dead in Christ, and death, so to speak, which was put to death and overcome in Him, ruled though in love to Jesus, under the influence, as to obedience and the power of death, of a system which His death had closed, but attached to Him. For, up to verse 56, *i.e.*, the end of the chapter, we have all according to the form and subsistence of Jewish order and dispensation—honoured of Jewish rulers, death in its power, the preparation and Sabbath observed. The resurrection had not yet broken the seal which was put upon the profitless flesh, though death indeed closed its character, and was its true seal and result, sin being entered. The honour and evening light which closed around the head of Him who had bowed to the storm of that hour, and the dishonour which had fallen upon Him, the affection and the desertion which marked the scene, all alike were stamped with a Jewish character—Messiah outraged, and Messiah at least in death with the rich. Beloved, betrayed, and deserted, He was still known after the flesh.

Chapter XXIV.

The morning of the Lord's power dissipated all this in fact, for indeed our minds are often slow of understanding, "slow of heart" to understand this new power and truth of the rising of Christ above all the principle of natural life, or rather death, and its result in testimony is what occupies Luke now. It is the risen Man again with His disciples, and the testimony founded on it to the world, beginning at Jerusalem. The women, however, preoccupied with their own thoughts and affections, come with their spices to anoint the dead body of Jesus, while He was indeed living in all the perfume of His work and offering before God, having effected all which placed man anew before God the Father—the Second Adam in living acceptance. Then they were thrown into an unlooked for difficulty at first, for they did not find Jesus nor His body. It was not there. But soon the question which cleared all up was put: "Why seek ye the living among the dead"? Still, all this was short of the Church. It based all on the resurrection, not on the flesh, but thus far ministered by Angels not by the Holy Ghost. It might be but the sure mercies of David. But the terms in which it was communicated opened a wider sphere, though only by their generality. He was risen, but He had predicted when in Galilee, before He came up even to Jerusalem, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men. He who concentred in Himself all the rights of man in righteousness according to the counsel of God, yet, as coming associated in responsibility with the evil, must suffer as Messiah, be

delivered by blinded Jews to sinners, and seal the guilt of sinful man by their denial, total denial and rejection of what God accepted in Man. He who was the Heir of glory (see Dan. vii.) according to the counsels of God, was to be delivered into the hands of men wilfully though recklessly acting after their own will—slaves to Satan. He would be crucified, but the third day rise again. This was the counsel of God: "They remembered His words." They went and reported what had been said: "To the eleven and to all the rest."

There was not faith properly in the resurrection, but there was enough to occupy their heart to tell to the disciples of what they had seen and heard. These faithful women, faithful if ignorant, were not forgotten of the Lord, and if eclipsed by the service of those whom the Lord sent, He, whose ways are grace, has preserved their memorial, and their early seeking of the Lord. If in ignorance, there to be instructed, and to bear the message to the Apostles themselves. But to these they were "as idle tales, and they believed them not." They were the tales of their imagination. But Peter's heart, if broken and sunk within, was the more affected by what he heard, and he runs "to the sepulchre: and, stooping down, he sees the" wrappings laid aside there, and he went away, apart, wondering. Thus far it was astonishment, and confusion of spirit. Surely it was a marvellous event which baffled, and rose above all human thought.

—13. *et seq.* The touchingness of this interview of the Lord in the journey to Emmaus need not be spoken of. How the Lord draws out all their thoughts! But He is here, I remark, altogether as a Man, and presenting the

truth. They speak Jewishly, and how naturally their thoughts rested always in the same circle. He was a Prophet, and they hoped might redeem Israel. The fact of the resurrection occupied their attention, but had no link with the counsels of God. They were astonished; there they rested. Christ takes up a quite other ground; not yet power, but understanding. He says: "Fools and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken." This He expounds, and opens their understandings to understand. For, though presenting Himself completely as Man, yet He operates Divinely and spiritually on their minds. The Lord takes this ground: "Ought not?" Was it not the counsel of God plainly revealed in His word? It was not presenting Himself, and the fact of the resurrection, but the mind of God relative to the Christ. This was an immense step. It took them out of their egoism, and the egoistical part of their Judaism. Having done this, and revealed the Scriptures as to the Christ (not the Son of God) their eyes are opened to know Him. Their hearts were opened by what encouraged them in connecting the truth of God with all that had happened to Jesus—their force in what was the cause of their despair, and that by the counsels of God in it. But His actual revelation was by the touching circumstance of personal affection and association in the breaking of bread. It was Himself did that. There could be no mistaking. Oh! May He be so revealed to our souls!

Filled with the great and concentrating event which began a new world, they hastened back to Jerusalem, where the eleven and others were themselves occupied. The holding of the eyes of the disciples was of evident

importance. To have recognised Jesus would have been to have satisfied their thoughts, to have received Him again according to their thoughts. The Lord, on the other hand, engaging all their affections to what God said of Him, furnished their souls with the Scriptural knowledge of God's mind concerning Him, and then, in the act of personal friendship which, in intimacy of kindness, recalled the great truth signified and brought to mind in the breaking of bread—another Passover by death—another deliverance and career of faith. The Lord provided thus that there should be independent witnesses.

—38. Thus their hearts were prepared. Yet in the fact of a risen Man on earth, this new thing, beginning of a new world, there was that to which earthly hearts could ill assort themselves. The Lord presents Himself as the very same Man. All through here Jesus presents Himself as Man, in every way, in His intercourse with the two disciples. All was human, though what no man ever was, what none but God could be, shone through it all. Here also His hands, His feet, all that marked His manhood, His previous wounds are presented. He eats. There were two sentiments which had possession of the disciples—overpowering joy to see Him Himself again, and then, as to their understanding, for it was no doctrine of truth, astonishment. The Lord presents it most familiarly to them. He eats and drinks before them—vast condescension! But reality and truth, and what restored their souls, and made them know Him as yet a Man, risen indeed, but a Man, properly and truly and really.

—44. But the Lord, having thus revealed Himself and satisfied them as to His real humanity, returns to the other

great point we have seen noticed in Luke, *i.e.* in this account of the resurrection. The fulfilment of testimony and purpose of God in the Word. It was but that which He had always told them when with them, that all things must be fulfilled which were written concerning Him. Man's hand but God's purpose was in all that occurred—purpose already revealed and declared in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Then (for this was not done yet, though they were attached to His Person) He opened their understanding to understand the Scriptures, and then recurs to this so important expression: "Thus it behoved" (οὕτως ἔδει) opening the door thereon to the activity of God's grace founded on this great truth of the suffering of Messiah (Christ) and His resurrection, the word thus reaching the Gentiles. For it is evident a Christ not received by the Jews, but crucified, was not a mere Jewish Christ, but, on the contrary, carried out the plan of God much farther in preaching peace to the sinner afar off by the sacrifice—repentance and remission of sins to all the Gentiles, though, dispensatorily, that began at Jerusalem.

The death of Christ broke the link with the Jews as a Jewish Messiah, but opened the door of grace to the Gentiles in going forth to them in grace, for it was no question of coming in to the Jews, for they had lost their link with the good and blessing in rejecting Messiah. It was God going forth in grace, by virtue of Christ's death, to the sinners that needed it, though He might begin with those that were nigh. As the Scriptures had declared the thoughts and ways of God as to these things, and thus to be accomplished, the disciples were to be witnesses of these things; that was their place. The word explained: "Thus

it behoved," and gave the mind of God in all these things; they were to be witnesses of them. And here came in the word of power distinct from the counsels of the Word, and the gift of understanding of it. To be witnesses they needed power. Already the Lord opened their understanding (on this Peter acted in explaining the case of Judas before Pentecost, but that was not power nor nomination by the Holy Ghost; it was lot and Jewish, but yet with understanding of the purpose and prophetic meaning of the word) to understand the Scriptures. It was want of this which had marred and rendered nugatory the recognition of the fact that Jesus was risen ("they saw," we read, "and believed, and went home," "for as yet they understood not the Scriptures") but there was no intelligence of the mind and purpose of God in it. But then further, they were to be witnesses, and here the occasion of power came in. This efficiently would carry them forth, whether at Jerusalem, or Samaria, or among the Gentiles. It was power, wherever it came, so as to ingather anew to a new Centre. The Association, though broken passively, so to speak, could not be actively in testimony, till the power came which could verify the new thing—the heavenly position and glory of Christ, for He must be, if witnessed or received, at Jerusalem or on high, though they who had received Him could (their understandings opened) receive and know Him risen, and the mind of God in His resurrection. But now power was to come from on high. Christ would receive and send the promise of the Father on them, and they were to abide at Jerusalem till this all important index of the exaltation of Christ to heaven came from on high. Thus also it was ordered they should begin at Jerusalem.

This presence of the Spirit is the great promise of the Father, for it is power on earth notwithstanding and paramount to all evil, and introductive of heavenly good and relationship. Hence it introduces the Gentiles, and passes necessarily by Judaism, so in Galatians (rising above Jew, Gentile, and all, in the power of a new Centre, Christ glorified) "that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. This however could only be obtained for men by the Man Jesus being presented as the new Man in the power of an accomplished sacrifice, the Head of blessing before God in this sense. Though the Holy Ghost had acted as a Divine Person from the beginning, whether in Creation or Prophecy, or in all good, He had never been given. This hung on the glory of Jesus; to that the Holy Ghost could become a Servant in man, for it was the Divine counsel, and the perfection of Divine love. He hath ascended up on high, He hath received gifts (*baadam*, in Man) Himself, and so for men. Hence the presence of the Spirit here below, while it ministers supreme love to, condemns necessarily man and the world which has its centre in him, and gathers round the new Man, Christ Jesus, and therefore also is heavenly. So the Holy Ghost does not speak of Himself as One here below, but what He hears He speaks, brings what is above and declares it by man. Hence also is it that the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets, for, in these gifts confided, they are the servants of Jesus, and, in communion with Jesus, employ them according to the wisdom of the Lord for good, and to this the Spirit as a Spirit of power is subject. It is a deposit of power to be used by the intelli-

gence of the Holy Ghost of the mind of Christ in us, not indeed man's prudence but the Lord's wisdom. For the Holy Ghost, as One giving the mind of Christ, guides the exercise of particular gifts to the purposes of this mind.

—50. We have here an evidence how completely Luke puts the events in order according to the moral force, and not according to chronology, from what happened in verse 43 to this verse. Forty days elapsed, the Lord went into Galilee from verse 44 to 49. Though it commences apparently with what happened the day of the resurrection itself, in continuation we have nothing but the moral position of the disciples; and what is said at the end was most probably said before He led them out for His ascension.

Bethany had been the Lord's resort as Man; there He sat with Lazarus; there He found a sort of home who had "not where to lay His head." There before He went on high, He gave His parting blessing; Divine in its efficacy, it was human in its form, and order, and affection. Moreover, this must not be in Jerusalem; He could not bless there now. It could not be written, it had not been: "We have blessed Thee out of the house of the Lord." He, the Lord who had loved it, must leave Jerusalem to bless. From the house of fellowship on the mount of corruption He gives His blessing, and takes His departure. There His savour remains; with that He is united. His affection, His interest remains, abides there. He was taken up into heaven. They worshipping Him according to His word, and themselves not yet affranchised, or endued with power, return to Jerusalem though He had left it. They returned with great joy filled with the new thought that their Master was victorious, glorified, exalted. When filled with

the Spirit many other things would occupy them. Hence we see the character often of joy.

It is not necessarily here the highest part of religion, nor connected with all truth. When entirely in the presence of God, a certain character of joy will be the accompaniment of our central blessing, but not this lively joy of circumstance exactly. Joy may be from the occupation of the natural affections without any real change, and the heart remain stony, as in the seed sown on stony ground. It may be from deliverance in a point where we have been anxious and distressed, from the obtaining some great point in which our hearts are interested at the moment. Whereas sympathy with Christ, while producing joy in Him, will give us the fellowship of His sufferings, labour, toil, anxieties. This was not yet come. They were left to the full influence of this great fact which acted now on their hearts. It was to have its weight and strengthen their souls. Messiah was risen and ascended. They were to be filled with this, and the Holy Ghost vivify, and act on this deposit. And so we find it was, for this was Peter's testimony, that the Man, the Messiah, rejected, God had exalted. Hence to them it was associated with Jewish thoughts and associations. Messiah was exalted: "And they were continually in the Temple praising and blessing God." But they were prepared by the thought of Christ exalted, vivified in power by the Holy Ghost, for wider and more concentrating witness and labours. But these two elements reproduce themselves evidently in the Acts—testimony to the exaltation of Messiah always viewed as Man. This continues even to the call of Cornelius, and the Jewish link of the Temple. It was their Messiah that

was exalted. This gave room to the Lord's dealing in grace to Israel. It changes in the death of Stephen in Paul. Christ owns in glory the persecuted Remnant as Himself. But in all this the Gentiles come in by the bye. They were the children of Jerusalem desolate, *i.e.* without a husband. Paul typifies the Remnant of Jews re-accepted; he who had been enemy as regards the Gospel. The comparison of Acts ii. 32, 33, is very distinct in identifying the view presented of the Holy Ghost, and the testimony with this Gospel.

Note the difference between the end of Luke and John xx. The history of the Ascension presents to us the blessed picture of Christ blessing them, and in the act of it taken up to heaven; but in John there is both, according to this character of the Gospel—a rejection of even restored Judaism as a present thing. Mary Magdalene, who had loved His Person as a Man revealed on earth, must not touch Him—He could not now be revealed as corporately taking the Kingdom. But He goes, she is to tell His brethren, to His Father and theirs, His God and theirs. That is He puts them into the same relationship with Himself as Son and Man in heaven—as all through this part He associates them with Himself. But here in yet hidden relationship with God, whereas in Luke the blessing goes forth to them on earth. It is not relationship, immutable relationship in heaven—God was that to them—but expressed blessing on them as left down here, and He therein or therewith gone up to heaven, parted from them. He is not parted from them in John, but they associated with Him in Heaven.

Note too, although Thomas's is a most blessed and remarkable testimony, prefiguring the Remnant of Israel's

in the latter day, yet it is evidently on a lower ground than what the Lord says to Mary Magdalene. Thomas looks, as previously unbelieving, not having been with the disciples, at Christ owning Him now appearing to him as his Lord and his God, but in Mary's message they are taught to look with Christ as Son and as the accepted Man with God in glory and perfectness, at the Father and God to whom Christ was going. This is another thing.

The whole scene in Luke xxiv. has this character of meeting men in their weakness, not taking them up to the higher place in glory. It is not "Peace be to you as my Father sent me forth, I also send you," but "they were terrified and affrighted, and thought they saw a spirit." And the Lord: "Why do thoughts arise in your hearts . . . . handle me and see . . . . it is I myself." How gracious! And the rest! It is blessed to see the sure heavenly place of Christ employed to show that we have the same with Him in Heaven, and that He ministers perfect blessing to our feebleness on earth out of it. And note this awakens the desires and affections more. I do not say it sanctifies more, but in John xx., as in Ephesians, we have standing and consequent conduct showing out the life and grace of Christ, but where Christ has left us; we long to go after Him; comp: 1 Peter i. 1—9. It is before us in hope. We are not risen with Him here, but in hope, though His resurrection we are not in heaven but kept on earth, and the incorruptible inheritance kept for us. This engages our affections in it, as Col. iii. So we are "kept through faith." We have not seen Him but love Him. He is precious to us. We are tried in heaviness, but greatly rejoice—yea "rejoice with joy

unspeakable and full of glory." We must not weaken Ephesian truth, but we must not loose hold of this in Peter. We shall find most souls in it, and admired as being there. This is false ground—I mean, to set it up against the other—but real souls are in it, and Christ is there for it, and most graciously and truly so. It does not produce Divine life on earth in the same way, but it cultivates heavenly affections in those who are walking there. God is full of grace, and towards us.

Remark, as illustrating other passages, how eternal life is presented as the result of a course pursued, and as a present life given, in the very same passage; Romans vi, 22, 23.

Note that Isaiah xl, in comforting Israel, shews the nothingness of flesh (in Israel as elsewhere) of the nations of idols compared with God. But the power and unweariableness of God secures Israel in grace. He that waits on Him, Jehovah, renews His strength.

SUMMARY OF LUKE.

The structure of Luke, though not so systematic in form as Matthew, is yet quite peculiar. We have first the lovely picture of the Jewish Remnant, on to the ministry of John, and the baptism and anointing of the blessed Lord.

Note in Luke when He is baptised, all the people had been baptised. He joins them in this path of God to be with them. When He puts forth His own sheep, He goes before them. We have the distinct difference of associating Himself with the godly Remnant in their Divine path however lowly a one, and His taking His sheep as the Divine Shepherd, whose own they were, clean out of the fold, going before them. Then His genealogy is traced up to Adam (read: "Jesus Himself began to be about thirty years old [being as was supposed the Son of Joseph] son of Heli, etc.) so, as before, Son of God, and so owned. Chap. iii. 23 in authorised Version is clearly wrong. It should be (being as was supposed Son of Joseph) τοῦ Ηλὶ (of Heli). The list begins with Heli not with Joseph. "Which was" is not in the text. He now comes out Son of Man. All this is very noteworthy, and, note, full of the Holy Ghost.

Then as such He is tempted and overcomes, and returns to Galilee in the power of the Spirit. But while announcing Himself as the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy, in grace in the midst of Israel, the Spirit of Jehovah upon Him, yet He shows Jehovah's consideration of the

Gentiles, so that they would have destroyed Him. He sets aside the demon's power, and heals Simon's wife's mother and, the Sabbath being ended, all manner of diseases, but leaves to preach everywhere. He calls His chief disciples, and Simon, through full conviction of sin, though attracting him by grace; touches a man full of leprosy, and, with a will the leper was not sure of, heals him — grace that came to touch the defiled and banish the defilement. He withdraws and prays, and then, in presence of all, manifests the title to forgive, as a present thing, in the power of healing (Ps. ciii.). Eats with publicans and sinners, come "not to call the righteous but sinners." The Bridegroom was there — they were not fasting days — He would soon be taken away from the disciples, and then would be fasting days. Besides, the power of His new doctrine could not be put into the old forms of Judaism. But man loves the old things he has drunk of. Tradition is his false delight, not the truth. This brings in the Sabbath, the sign of the Covenant with Israel. All is common if the Son of David be rejected, and the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.

Again, the hatred of the Jews is called forth. All this is the setting aside of Judaism, and the revelation of the Son of Man for sinners, and Gentiles, and all oppressed of the devil. Again, He passes all night in prayer (for praying distinguishes Him in Luke) and chooses the Twelve as a company belonging to Himself. There was the company of His disciples, and a great multitude. He does good to all, but distinguishes the disciples formally here. "Blessed are ye poor;" we get the moral instructions that belong to His own. Though still going with the

Jews, and giving heed to them, He owns the Gentile, has "not found such faith, no, not in Israel," and raises the dead far away above all promises to Israel as such, or their thoughts in the promised Messiah, though intimations of it are found in the Prophets. This awakens universal rumour, and John himself is put upon the ground of faith by what Jesus did in power and grace, being fully owned in his ministry, though the least in God's Kingdom was greater than he. The repentant justified God—a remarkable expression; the self-righteous despised the grace. "Wisdom" was "justified of all her children" both in confession of sin, in John's ministry, and confidence in the grace come in Christ's Person. The striking example of this in the account that follows is deeply touching. We have the Pharisee's heart in utter blindness, God's heart, and the convinced and confiding sinner's heart, which just meets exactly the revelation of God's, as that did it, the answer of forgiveness, salvation and peace being added. Thus the whole moral condition of things is fully brought out.

Note, I see three principles in chaps. v and vi. First, change of mind instead receiving the righteousness, for here, I suppose, repentance is genuine. "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." Next, power brought in which could not adapt itself to the old system. Spiritual power, the new wine, could not be put into old bottles. Thirdly, grace, mercy contrasted with forms and sacrifice. The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath. In the sermon following, the difference between it and Matthew is, it is less specially dealing with Judaism, giving great general principles in themselves. Matthew is in contrast, "To the ancients" (τοῖς ἀρχαίοις). But then Luke goes

on to full following Christ in His motives and walk; vi, 40. In general in viii, ix, in Luke, you have the change from Messiah there to the time of the end, and Son of Man.

Chap. viii. stands a little by itself. It is transitional. The disciples are formally distinguished as to the mysteries of the Kingdom, which are opened to them; to the rest in parables, that they seeing might not see, and hearing not understand. They were a judged people. With this testimony as to the Word individually received or not, He warns His disciples that He did not light up the truth to put it under a bushel. They were responsible for all they heard, and, if realised, more would be given. But everything would be made manifest. But with this He rejects His natural associations with Israel, and owns those who hear the Word of God and do it. But accompanying Him they would find storms, and He to man's eye seem asleep and indifferent. But they were in the same boat with Him; it was only want of faith that feared. In what follows, we have the, so to speak, public and private state of what was going on. The Remnant delivered, whatever the power of Satan, the rest as unclean swine hurried to destruction, the delivered desiring to be with Him when the world turned Him out, but he was to go and be a witness of the deliverance he had experienced. When Jesus came back to the people they were waiting for Him. Then the private account. He was in the crowd of Israel to heal them as sick, but they were found in the place of death, but, for Jesus, only sleeping. Meanwhile, where, on His way through the crowd one touched Him with faith, she was perfectly healed.

Chap. ix. is the turning point of the whole Gospel. He

sends out the Twelve for the announcement of the Kingdom everywhere, giving them power Divinely to heal, but it was, as a general testimony, final. They were to shake off the dust of their feet if not received, and He, as Emmanuel in Israel, provided for them. The rumour reached too the king through that it had awakened among all, and his conscience even trembled. He takes the disciples apart, but the multitude come, and again He shows Himself to be Jehovah in Israel, satisfying the poor with bread. Again, alone praying, He draws from the disciples the current rumours as to Himself, and their own faith that He was the Christ of God, and forbids them to say it any more, for the Son of Man was to be slain, and blessing was to be in resurrection; they too must take up the cross. But not only would the Son of Man come in His own glory, *i.e.* as Son of Man, His Father's, *i.e.* as Son of God, and Jehovah's with the holy Angels, but He shews them the Kingdom to be set up in all its parts as to man. Mortals on earth, saints with and like Him in glory, and saints within the cloud whence the Father's voice came, and Jesus was now alone to be listened to. Alas! the disciples were asleep as in Gethsemane. Still the incapacity to use His present power (which they had exercised when sent out) makes Him say His departure was at hand, though still Himself perfect in grace and power, but He returns to the point of taking up the Cross. He judges self in all its shapes therewith. He, at any rate, was going to be now received up. He warns others, there must be no looking back. He is on His way up to Jerusalem, and sends seventy on before Him where He was coming, but now avowedly as sheep among wolves, carrying peace, telling

them with demonstration of power and goodness that the Kingdom of God was come nigh, and, if rejected, to shake off the dust of their feet, but leaving the solemn word that the Kingdom of God was come nigh. They returned with joy, but though these powers (miracles) of the world to come prognosticated the fall of Satan, they were rather to rejoice in another thing, that their names were written in heaven where all tended now. He then contemplates the whole scene before His Father, and His own true place in the matter. Blessed those whose eyes were opened to see what was even then there in His Person!

Chap. x. 18—24, gives a wonderfully full revelation of all that was in Christ's heart at that moment when He was going away, "Names written in Heaven," revelation "to babes," the Son too glorious to be known, which was His true character, the Father known to Him only, and to those He revealed Him to—the then blessing of those whose eyes had been opened to see what they saw by His presence. The rest turns the perfection of Law and so of Judaism into grace. Verses 38—42 give the preciousness of the Word of Christ, but goes rather with what follows. But see the exquisite sweetness of the outgoing of Christ's heart in 18—24. They were to rejoice having their names written in heaven where He was now going, registered there, though the powers they wielded were those of the world to come, when Satan, fallen from heaven, would be fully bound. Jesus rejoiced in Spirit over the blessing conferred on them by the Father whose good pleasure had been in revealing to these simple ones these things. And then in full love to them, and what they could understand who had received Him as Messiah the Son of God,

pronounces blessed those to whom He withal as Son had revealed the Father. It is an exquisite expression of Christ's heart when passing from this world to the Father.

Then the Word, His Word and prayer, its blessing, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. Then the open Spirit-blaspheming enmity of the nation, and Himself the only Centre; he who was not with Him was against Him. All was brought to a point now. Yet blessing was not in natural relationship to Him, but in hearing the Word of God and keeping it. The generation was judged. The Ninevites and a queen of the South would be a witness against them. The testimony was to go abroad, but singleness of eye gave reception and fulness of light. The Pharisees and Scribes and Lawyers are then judged. How fully the moral question is raised here, though in the Person of Jesus! The whole of what follows to chap. xviii. 34, gives the moral discussion of their state, and all that was in question in His going away, only that xv, xvi, give the fulness and ways of grace that were coming in. From xviii, 34, the last events are recorded.

Chap. xii. brings the whole state of His disciples, when He had left them, fully out. It was a path of faith, but all would come out, death might come for them as for Him; they were not to fear it but God. The Holy Ghost would be with them to answer when called upon in persecution. He had not come to set things right in the world. Riches were only deceit; where would the soul go? The disciples were not to be careful but to trust. They were a people separate from the nations of the world, but it was the Father's good pleasure to give them the Kingdom; they need not fear. But they were to wait for Him to come

again; meanwhile to watch and serve, and blessing from Him in rest with Him, and the inheritance would be theirs. Judgment would come on the servant who acted as if the Lord delayed coming. The Lord had come to bring division and trial on the earth, still His baptism (death) would open the floodgates of love. The people were warned that there was plenty to show the time they were in. If they did not agree with Jehovah still in the way with them, they would be delivered up to judgment (and so they have been) till the time comes. Verses 58, 59, are the then judgment of the Jews; 45, 46, of the professing Church; 48 makes the difference of those who knew His rule.

Chap. xiii. continues the setting aside of Judaism. If they did not repent they would be destroyed as those they spoke of to the Lord. Then the Sabbath, seal and sign of the old Covenant, rest of the first Creation, is dealt with, and the character of the Kingdom of heaven, as coming in, shewn forth. From verse 22 to the end, the matter is brought directly to a point. Nor would restoration come till there was repentance, according to Psalm cxviii. All this is on the way up to Jerusalem.

As often remarked we have much more the moral development in Luke than dispensational, and so the present time, but the Lord continues to show the setting aside the Jewish system. The Sabbath comes up again, and Jewish hyprocrisy is again made manifest, and the Lord acts in Divine grace; mercy overrides law. Then the real principles of the Kingdom, lowliness and gracious love, in contrast with the spirit of the world; the resurrection of the just would bring the true reward. Lowliness and grace go together. Then we get the invitation to the

Kingdom-supper, on the remark of one who sat at meat. The Jews (men) would all make excuse (save what grace called) and not taste of it. But the Lord would have His house filled, first from the poor Remnant, then from those outside, the Gentiles. It was grace. Those who would follow Him must break with all for Him, and take up their cross. They must count the cost, and even then, if the salt lost its savour it is good for nothing; xv, xvi, are grace seeking, grace receiving. Man (Israel) a steward out of place, wisdom was to use his Lord's goods for the future, not for the present. The Israelitish system of prosperity being a sign of Divine favour was all over, it belonged to a direct government of this world. The Lord opens the other to our view, as telling the true tale.

In xvii. the Lord continues the principles which affect the conduct of the disciples, in view of the utter passing away of the system in which they were. First, stumbling blocks would come, as the salt might lose its savour, but woe to him by whom they came. Then with brethren there should be the most constant forgiveness if they turned repenting to them. The least faith would remove the tree by its roots, and plant it elsewhere, for it was faith in all power. But after all, if they had done everything they had just done their duty. But the revelation of God, and goodness in power, centred in Him now, though He still recognised Judaism. But grace reached a Samaritan, and a Samaritan, finding where grace and power was, had no need to go to Jerusalem and the priest. The Kingdom was there in His Person. The disciples would desire to see one of those days soon, but the Son of Man would finally come as the lightning. It would be as the days of Noe and Lot. All

this is the earthly coming, but not wholly Jewish in form as in Matthew. We know Jerusalem is the centre of all then, and the passage applies to the judgment of that people. But wherever the carcase was, there would the judgment fall. But God would surely avenge His elect who should be crying day and night to Him; but what faith would the Son of Man find when He came? But He was going first to suffer.

We have then the moral question of righteousness, goodness in man, where a lovely character and upright law-keeping were found, and the heart judged in its state instead, and what the world is, and all it has, in view of God's Kingdom. With man salvation is impossible, not with God. But if all is forsaken for Christ, there is a hundredfold, and everlasting life. Finally, the Lord takes the Twelve to Him to declare plainly to them what was about to take place, in clear and unmistakeable terms, resting all, as ever, on His resurrection. Blessing was to be there, not in the living Christ here, precious as that life was and is to us. But they understood nothing of it, such is the power of false religious ideas.

In Luke, as in all three, the last events begin with the blind man of Jericho, and Christ here formally takes the character of Son of David. But there is this peculiar to Luke, that Zaccheus's story is introduced with Son of Man and grace, the case of the blind man being related first, with a very general expression of the neighbourhood of Jericho. It is, as ever in Luke, the moral character of Son of Man, not given up though taking, as a last test, the place of Son of David, and Lord. Here we have not the general truth that the humbled publican was justified rather than

the pretentious Pharisee, nor no man good, the heart being tested where outwardly the law had been kept; but upright thought and feeling seeking to approve itself to God, dealt with on the ground that the Lord had to do with the lost. The people still go on the ground of their own righteousness, and murmur at His going to a publican's. Christ recognises Zaccheus's title according to promise; he was a son of Abraham, but salvation was come to his house that day. Promise was true and to be fulfilled, but as taking up sinners. Zaccheus, who, to approve himself to the Lord, happy at His coming in to him (ill-seen as he was) declares to Him the moral rectitude with which he acted. The Lord passes it all over. He knew no righteousness in Jews, but He did own promise. But that day salvation was come there. The Son of Man, that was His real character as a Saviour, was come to seek and to save what was lost. Hence He goes to a publican's and that close to Jerusalem; son of Abraham he was, as other Jews, upright too as other Jews were not, but salvation came to him then as lost. It is a very peculiar case, coming in here. He then brings in responsibility to an absent Lord in His servants, and the destruction or judgment of Jerusalem (His enemies who rejected Him) when He returned. Son of David He was, but He was going to receive the Kingdom from the Father on high. Then, as in all the Gospels, He formally takes the character of "The Lord." Matthew and Mark never say "The Lord," only "Jesus," but then also, in this place, the Lord says it of Himself, takes formally this character in entering into the city. Luke, speaking more from the present Gentilized, Christian aspect, I think, of the Gospel when He was gone, more than once in narration

says :—"The Lord." John once in chap. iv, when He left Judæa to labour, as rejected, in Galilee. In the Acts it is habitually "The Lord," and "Lord Jesus." And owned He must be, if the stones should do it. But, as we have heretofore seen, it is in Luke celebrated as founded on heaven being cleared, and peace there, *i.e.* after Michael's war. He announces with tears the present destruction of Jerusalem, but, with the authority of Lord, clears the Temple. He is less as Son of David, and more as Lord here ; Matthew is more on the earth, with what belonged to Him there. The difference in the prophecy is striking ; the present interval is there clearly stated. In the answer to the Sadducees, the present state of departed souls, all of them, is given, and the whole tone is different ; so xxii, 16—19, is present fulfilment.

Though Paul brings into heaven, he brings us into heaven, though in Christ, but Christ as being exalted, brought there as Man, while John, though as we have seen not heavenly, is Divine.

I am inclined to think that "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" is not simply Godhead but Christ in redemption. The passage Ephes. iv, 10, leads me to this. It is redemption—He who went into the lower parts of the earth, and now far above all heavens.

COMPARISON OF LUKE AND MATTHEW.

After the lovely picture of the Remnant in chaps. i. and ii, we have salvation made manifest to all, the nation warned, and the Remnant recognized, sovereign grace in electing love, and complete judgment just ready, and the axe laid to the root of the trees; verses 6, 7, 8, 9. This is important as regards the character of Luke's Gospel. It is to be remarked too, that Luke, when replying to the musings of the people, does not speak of Christ's work, only of the active glory of His Person. He baptizes with the Holy Ghost, and with fire, power of life, and blessing, and judgment, and then the present judgment of Israel (though the same thing will take place with the professing church). Then in Luke we find immediately the rejection of the testimony by the existing powers in Israel, and Christ traced up not to Abraham and David, or the roots of promise, but to Adam; so that the dealing with Israel continues up to the genealogy. It is a Remnant, a testimony of warning to the nation of immediate judgment, but Christ there, the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost, and judging His floor. The first two chapters were the Remnant when He came—this the testimony of His precursor, and coming judgment, and the testimony rejected. It is after this that we have the Lord owned as Son, the heaven opens, and the Spirit descends, and here manifested as the dependent Man, for it is not only

as baptized, but as He was praying that this occurred. And then He is traced up to (Son) of Adam, (Son) of God. "Of Eli" is connected with Jesus Himself I believe ("being, as was supposed, Son of Joseph," being a parenthesis) and here traced up naturally not legally. Even in the expression: "Full of the Holy Spirit" we find the Man.

Then (iv.) in the power of the Spirit, as in Person Second Adam, He goes into the temptation, being led of the Spirit, and overcomes. The order is moral, as noticed, as much craving of nature as could be sinlessly, the world, and then spiritual temptation. Here no ministering Angels, but the devil departs for a season, *i.e.* till Gethsemane and the Cross. And He pursues His service in the power of the Spirit. He presents Himself in Nazareth, His natural home on earth as the fulfilment of the coming one in its moral blessing. But, as noticed before, Israel though first addressed dispensationally, is the object of grace not of promise here, and sovereign grace to the widow of Sarepta, and the Syrian leprous man, is held up as the example of God's ways, exciting the wrath of all in the synagogue. Still He continues His ministry of grace, nothing changed by this, going His way unharmed through them. He drives out devils, and heals all under the effects of His power, but goes on, not stayed by the people, to preach the Kingdom of God, being sent for that. This gave His ministry as a whole or service.

He then by the revelation of His Person in power, bringing the consciousness to man of what he also was, gathers disciples round Himself. They leave all for Him. We have thus the character of His ministry, the power of Jehovah

in grace, the leper cleansed yet subjected to an unchanged law as yet. But He is the dependent Man withal, as constantly in Luke, and diligent as such. He withdrew into the wilderness and prayed, away from the multitude, *quod nota.* Then again, there is forgiveness and power, Jehovah, according to Ps. ciii., meeting the faith of man. The receiving of sinners whom He came to call; the unsuitableness of His disciples fasting then, for He was the Bridegroom Himself, and the impossibility of putting Divine power in grace into the old bottles of Judaism. As Son of Man He is Lord of the Sabbath. The rejected Son of David makes all common. Grace reigns, not Law. It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day. This, as to His ministry, was conclusive as to its place in respect of Israel. We then find Him again the dependent Man earnestly praying, continuing at it all night. When day is come, He chooses the Twelve, surrounding Himself with the chosen and constant companions of His ministry; only Judas was there. And then descending to a level place, people from outside Israel being there too, come to hear and to be healed, and then declares (not as in Matthew, the character of the Kingdom, and what men must be to enter it, but) the blessedness of the separated Remnant. For in the wider sphere of grace, in the Son of Man, Israel is now looked at as morally judged as to promises. Pronounces woe on the contented world, and teaches, to those that hear, the path of the spirit of grace. The blind leaders of Israel could only lead the blind people into the ditch. He leads those who follow Him wholly into the same walk as His own. Self-judgment is for us the first element of truth.

It is well to remark here that perfection is not in nature

here, it is connected with teaching or leading. A man is "perfected," not perfect; and having heard what his master teaches, he is, in his mind and thoughts, what his master is, because he has received what is in his master's, and this is the Christian state. Still it looks to realizing what Christ was. His word forms us into what He was practically. We live by, and so according to it. We suffer with Him too. Next Gentiles are recognized as having faith such as Israel had not, but we have nothing of their sitting in the Kingdom with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is more dispensational; here moral. Then power to set aside death in compassionate love. This brings about the putting John Baptist and Christ into their true place. But the sinners were there who profited by John, and so received Christ; the Pharisees not—they judged crookedly in self-righteousness, or absence of conscience—conscience judges rightly. Of this we have then that most striking example of the Pharisee and the woman. She was a child of Wisdom, and Wisdom's heart and hers perfectly met for eternal peace and rest. The Pharisee had the Lord in his house, and never knew it. The instruction is as beautiful as deep, where man's heart meets God's who is Light and Love; not one trace of either in the Pharisee—simple darkness, man judging—both in Christ and both operative in the woman who, reached in conscience, got into both, or both fully into her heart. The full answer too is given of them through Christ, forgiveness, peace and salvation. It is, in every respect, the heart that clings close to Christ that gets true knowledge. The Lord, even though He reproach us not, is sensible to the neglect of Himself.

We see the different tone of the instruction of Matthew and Luke in what follows. There, the Sower is consequent on judgment (chap. xii.) of Israel. Here it is merely the real character of His service. Grace, not Judaism, was at work, and the rejection of mother and brethren is merely taking the word as the ground on which He owned relationship with Himself, not natural relationship. Chap. viii. gives some other elements of His power as Son of Man, and ministry, without the dispensational order of Matthew, but, with some of the dispensational truth as to the actual state of things, the moral scene is given. The order is, as we have seen elsewhere, historical till ix, and after xviii, 34. First, He commands the elements of nature, Satan's power, I apprehend, alarming the disciples in their want of faith, but proving only the perfect calmness of His soul, and His power over it all. Then Satan's power comes out in possession, which man would bind if he could but cannot. A word drives the Legion away ; it is the deliverance of man, in fact of the Remnant. Only in Luke (so in Mark) we have details as to the state of man, and the position of the world, the delivered one, and, I doubt not, the Jews given up for the time to their ruin. The man would have been with Jesus when he left the world that would not have Him, but is sent back as a witness of the deliverance of which he had been the object. Besides the great facts of power revealing the Person of Christ, Son of Man, we have had as we have seen, man wholly under Satan's power, whom man cannot bind or deliver from, and then, instead of going with Christ away, he is left as a witness when Christ does. The Jews rush to destruction, so that is, so to speak, Christian ground ; what follows is Jewish. Christ is called

to go to a dying person; thronged by the multitude in Israel for present benefits, virtue goes out only when touched by faith (this form only in Mark and Luke). He has to raise the dead when Israel is concerned, as with all. It is grace towards Israel, not as in the other judgment where Christianity is in view.

I think in chap. ix. we begin a new section quite of this Gospel. The result in Christianity and Judaism has been stated. His place as Son of Man, and then connection with Judaism and the Law, or rather impossibility of it, and the blessing of the Remnant, had been shewn, Judaism being morally set aside as unfit for it. There are no Kingdom-parables, *quod nota;* we shall soon have grace-parables. The Sower there is, which is Christ with the Word, and individual. We are now going to look out to the suffering Son of Man. But it begins with His personal and coming glory, and then insists on the Cross. Hitherto it was the gracious Son of Man present, and its effect—a Remnant gathered and blessed. Now it is a source of mission, authoritatively requiring recognition. And grace is connected with salvation, and another world, and the cross here. He could bring the dead back here; now He is going to die and go away Himself. Grace and goodness had been manifested too, and that even to Gentiles, to the miserable, to sinners, and power before which all evil disappeared (see iv, 18—21, and vii, 22, 23). Still, with Israel morally set aside, by sovereign grace, iv, 25—27, where it goes over Israel's head to Naaman and to Sidon, and that Israel could not bear. It was grace, and grace is sovereign, and sovereign love. Now, the grace being even greater, He takes another character, higher and

lower. Nor could grace confine itself to Jews, for it is God. Nor is He presented, after chap. iii. as Son of God, truly as He was so, save in the temptation by Satan, and by devils whom He silenced. In the first two chapters, in Israel He is. For He had taken the lowly place. The evil spirits could not help owning Him, only He received no such testimony, but Himself, when He begins His own testimony in chap. iv, takes the lowly, but soon to be exalted place of Son of Man. In chap. i, 35, the Angel calls Him so as come on earth; iii, 22, He is so owned. So in fact Himself in ii, 49.

Christ then in chap. ix. is the Sender of servants, and Giver of power, but follows continually His patient and blessed service. (It was a testing mission to Israel, but its confinement to Israel is not specifically defined as in Matthew). So He tells the disciples to give them to eat, for they had seen His power with them. They reckon by sight, but He satisfies the poor with bread. But in verse 18 we find Him again the dependent Man, praying, forbids them to announce Him as the Christ of God, telling them the Son of Man must suffer. This was the path He was now actually entering on; a suffering Son of Man in Him who could show Jehovah's power, and not Israel's Christ, is what now comes before us. And this was to be the disciples' path, and blessing was in resurrection after death. This is evidently a great moral change in the whole position. Besides the folly of losing one's soul for the world, the appearing of Christ in glory is the answer to the Cross. (I note in 26, it is not "His" Father's but "the" Son of Man's glory in the Father's "Thou in Me"). And what

constituted the glory of Jehovah now made subservient to the Son of Man. This to confirm their faith was to be shewn to some of His disciples. But He went up to the mountain in human dependence, went up to pray. So, constantly, when power is to be displayed through us. In the Transfiguration we have much more detail in Luke. In all, the Kingdom-glory is revealed, but it is the general fact in Matthew; here more. It was "As He prayed," the dependent and living Man. Many other interesting details are here. Moses and Elias speak of His decease; this is the great point now. Glory brings this in. It is in the counsels of God, but in the intimacy of intercourse (note too it is the same with the disciples on earth). The disciples are asleep (as they were too in Gethsemane). But Moses and Elias go into the cloud where the Father spoke. This revelation of Christ brings on, connected with the unbelief of His disciples, His leaving the world (41) but grace wrought in it even while He was here. But the Lord, in the midst of power which amazed all, insists on His death and the Cross. In presence of this also we have man and the disciples contending for greatness in the Kingdom, which in its then form was passing away. This gives occasion to the Lord's exposing self in every form, however subtle, and pressing the paramount claim of the Saviour to nature, however strong the tie. It was only nature, not the power of God to salvation. Note that here the Lord (51), is on His last journey up to Jerusalem.

Grace (chap. x.) sends a final message before His face, but carrying judgment with it if rejected; but the messengers must now have their joy in Heaven where Christ was going. And Christ accepts in perfectness His

Father's orderings as to it, and gets thus into the sense of the true and glorious secret—He was the Son, and no man could know Him but the Father He was revealing, and none could but He the Father, and that the world would not. He revealed Him to whom He would. Still, blessed the eyes which were given to see what was then seen. Then the Law is morally turned into grace as to man down here. It is not: "Who is my neighbour"? But to whom am I neighbour as the good Samaritan was? Priests and Levites are not grace.

We have in what follows a remarkable mixing up of the principles that should govern His disciples, and warnings of impending judgment. All was changing in His death, and they needed to be taught how to walk, while, though dispensational changes are not systematically taught as in Matt. xiii, 16, 17, yet the warnings presently needed for Israel and its leaders are given. First comes the diligent hearing of Christ's word, and prayer, and again the importance of hearing God's word the only relationship He owned now. Chap. xi. 27, 28, this is connected with the attributing His casting out a demon to Beelzebub, and the warning of the bearing of so saying. If it was not Beelzebub, which was absurd as well as wicked, then the Kingdom of God was come to them. Then He warns the people, pointing out Who was there, the testimony lifted up, the secret of having light or a single eye, and then denounces Pharisees, Scribes and lawyers, and the result for that generation. Accumulated guilt would thus far close its career.

The first twelve verses of chap. xii. encourage the disciples by various motives in the testimony in the midst

of this hostile and evil generation. They were to be in the light with God, not in the plotting darkness of their enemies. Nor were they to fear them; they might kill the body—God's judgment went much farther. Besides the hairs of their head were all numbered by Him by whom a sparrow was not forgotten. Further, if they confessed the Son of Man before men, He would confess them before the Angels of God. Again, one who spoke of Him in humiliation might be forgiven, but they would speak by the Holy Ghost, and for those who spoke injuriously of Him there was no forgiveness. He was to speak in them in all their answers before rulers when accused. We have then the principles for the world and for the disciples, which do as to one, and should as to the other, govern our minds as to this world, while Christ rejects setting it right, and turns to the condition of the heart. Folly, even on their own ground, governs the world, faith and confidence in God should the Christian. The instruction as to disciples begins at verse 22. Down to 31, they are roused to confidence by looking at God's care of everything, and the infinitely gracious truth that we are of value to God. In seeking first the Kingdom of God, their need would be met; their Father knew they had need of temporal supplies for the body. Verse 32 goes much further, not that life was something better than raiment, nor that their mere wants their Father took notice of, but the special privileges that belonged to them in grace. They need not fear, it was their "Father's good pleasure to give" them "the Kingdom." Then to verse 48, we have heavenly joy for watchers, the inheritance of all things for service, but the judgment of the professing Church,

if in heart they said: "My Lord delays his coming." Its portion would be with unbelievers, and judgment according to possessed advantages. From 49, we have the then present state of things. The Cross would bring persecutions and conflict, but the fire was already kindled. But then what is outwardly trial and conflict has an inward object and blessing according to God's purpose. A rejected Saviour brought conflict not peace on the earth, but then the love, in which He came alive here, was driven back by the unbelief and ill-will of man. He was straightened till the Cross, the baptism of death, opened the floodgates of Divine love in the Gospel. Still this would produce division and in families, and a rejected Christ bring out the worst evil of the human heart. From 54 to 58, we have the then question in Israel. And if they did not agree with Jehovah thus pleading with them on the way, they would be delivered to judgment till fully chastened, as it is at this day, though Isaiah xl. relents so graciously over them.

In the first ten verses of the following chapter, their present judgment is confirmed after the fullest patience and pains of the Dresser of the Vineyard. From 11 to 17, grace is affirmed, their hypocrisy shewn, and the Sabbath, seal of the Covenant, treated as ever by the Lord. Then the character of the Kingdom briefly shewn. Again, the warning as to the true character of the Kingdom, the entrance is narrow, and soon the door would be shut. Many would seek to enter in (not by the strait gate) and not be able. Still the Lord must continue for His allotted time, and a Prophet was not to perish out of Jerusalem. The pride of being near God ecclesiastically is the greatest

enemy of the truth and word of God. Often would the Lord have gathered Jerusalem's children, and they would not, now her judgment coming, and they would not see Him any more till ready to receive Him with thanksgiving. The Sabbath, as Israel, is again put in its place, a lowliness of deportment and grace presented as the path of the disciple. The distinct resurrection of the first being brought out, the present rejection of Jerusalem, and introduction of the Gospel in the way of grace stated in a parable; so far different from Matthew, that grace to the poor of the flock among the Jews is introduced, not the second appeal to the nation, while judgment passes on those first bidden but more terribly, not dispensationally in destroying the city, but not tasting the supper. Then for all, it is pressed that they must take up their cross—that is the way now. If the cross were lost practically, the salt had lost it savour, *quod nota*, and savourless salt is good for nothing.

We have then the chapters which bring out distinctly grace and its fruits and bearings. Grace that seeks, and grace that receives. The Good Shepherd, the Spirit, the Father, with the details of bringing back. This goes deeper than all dispensation and Judaism. It is God's nature and joy. Israel, man, who had a stewardship with God, has lost his place, but remains with power over his Lord's goods; his wisdom is to use them for his future hope not for his present enjoyment. Then the veil is drawn, and the other world brought in, for Jews' blessing in this world was the sign of favour. Eternal moral truth tells another tale. Man's heart had received his good things, and that was over for ever. This is characteristic of Luke—what is moral, and consequently eternal.

It is remarkable how Luke opens up general moral principles, and the passing away of Jerusalem in judgment in chap. xvii., in the judgment of the latter days. But it is not the substitution of some other dispensational system, but what is essential and moral, and so eternal in its nature. Yet Judaism, as a system, must be judged for that. And even the parables of grace are in contrast with Judaism in their moral nature. The Lord, in chap. xvii., opens up many of these moral principles. First, putting no trap before people, so that the weakest should be ensnared. Then comes the spirit of forgiveness. Then that whatever the labour of the disciples, they had only done their duty. The Samaritan stranger recognizing God in Jesus is not subject to Jerusalem or Jewish order, but goes in peace having found the Lord in Him, while Jewish order is submitted to as yet, where faith does not rise above it. Next the Kingdom of God was there in His Person, but the Son of Man would be in His day as a flash of lightning. It would be as in the days of Noe, and the days of Lot; a day of trouble when men must escape judgment at all risks, but God would have His own safe, taking by judgment one of two out of the same bed, or from the same mill. Only that first the Son of Man "must suffer many things, and be rejected of" that "generation." It is the judgment of the quick. Jerusalem is not marked in so many words. Wherever the object of judgment was, the Lord's judgment would be—the lifeless form of what should have been living to be owned.

Chap. xviii., to the end of verse 34, continues the same moral displacing of Judaism. The first part, 1—8 has a special application to the Remnant at the end, but belongs

to us all; 10—14, is a general truth too, but morally sets aside Judaism also; 15—17, the principle of the Kingdom —who are to be received; 18, the whole principle of man's relationship with God is discussed; 28—30, the special answer on giving up all for Christ, and then the Cross fully pressed on them. All these are very important moral principles of the Kingdom as it is; 35, as in the other Gospels, begins the history of the last events connected with Jerusalem. Still the moral setting aside of the system is strikingly apparent all through, as contrasted with the dispensational. We have first the case of Zaccheus; grace coming where the curse began—the valley of Achor is the door of hope. In Zaccheus we have one, who in the Jewish point of view and Pharisaism, was the vilest of the vile. The money they could gain, by accepting the subjection of their country to Gentiles, made them their base instruments. Zaccheus, though in this position, was an upright man, and acted uprightly according to the law, if he failed. He desired also to see Jesus, and so much so as to put himself in a position unfitting for his civil standing, and make the case public. The Lord invites Himself to his house, and we have the desire and uprightness met, but no account taken of them in the salvation. "This day," when Christ came there, "salvation" came to the house. Zaccheus in honesty of heart would approve himself to the Lord. But the Lord takes account of promises; he was a son of Abraham but lost, like the rest; but the Son of Man was come to seek and save the lost. The Jews' judgment was wrong; Zaccheus' ground was false, but promise and salvation for the lost were the ground the Lord goes on. It is no question of Israel's recovery,

but the general truth of salvation to the lost brought by the Son of Man.

But nigh to Jerusalem, and some expecting the Kingdom at once, He proclaims His own absence; He went to a far country to receive a Kingdom and return. And here we have not all rested on their knowledge of the Lord's character, as in Matthew, and, whatever was gained, entering into the Lord's joy, though of different capacity and gift as workmen, but the command to "occupy" till Christ comes—the Christian servant's place — and each has his *mina**; the responsibility in the workman is in relief, and one has ten cities, another two, reward according to effectual labour—and "to him that hath shall more be given." This is Christian service. Meanwhile His citizens, the Jews, hated, and sent a messenger after Him, that they would not have Him as their King. On His return, they are judged and destroyed. Yet grace was then at work; He returns to Jerusalem in the end and weeps over it, but it is not Jehovah who would often have gathered, but the then present grace which is in relief. His disciples celebrate Him as Messiah, but with the remarkable cry: "Peace in heaven." The Kingdom cannot be till there is peace there, nor can that be till Satan is cast out. Testimony must be rendered to Him, but now peace was hidden from the eyes of Jerusalem, judgment was just coming. All this, though judgment be announced, goes further and wider than Matthew. The cleansing of the Temple is briefly stated. The question of His authority is pretty much as in Matthew. In the husbandman and Vineyard the responsibility of the Jews is much more minutely gone into. In 35 and 36, the Christian hope in

* *i.e.* pound. A.V.

the first resurrection is far more fully gone into, and the proof from the last contains an all important element, for the other world is much more before Luke. All here unto Him, not merely saints with whom God identifies His Name. Their part is in a certain sense deduced from, or identical at least with the fact that, for God, though the body be gone, none are dead. He has to do with their living souls, when it is. He then puts the testing question as to Ps. cx.

How remarkably, while the highest condition of mere spiritual power and enlightening, where grace and lowly life are not, is shown to be only irreparable danger and ruin, when it is alone, the smallest fruit of life is secured by the testimony of the strongest impossibility of God's for a moment failing in making good His promises, and sustaining in grace, enlightened, and tasting good, and working miracles. I fall away and there is no hope. I fly for refuge to the hope set before me, the word and oath of God secure me.

The more we compare John's Gospel and Epistle, the more we shall see the contrast of the instruction—life in Christ, light in the world, in the Gospel; but Christ, life in the believer (in us) in the Epistle. Hence darkness comprehended it not; darkness passing, the true light now shining. The life was manifested; we walk in the light as God is in it. The instruction is very great in this. In Him was life—light perfectly adapted to men—now, which thing is true in Him and in you, for the darkness is passed (passes or is passing) and the true light now shineth. We walk in it as God is in it.

THE LORD'S RELATIONS.

MARY.

His mother and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene ; John xix, 25.

Mary Magdalene, and Mary mother of James and Joses ; Matthew xxvii, 56.

Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary ; Matthew xxvii, 61, and xxviii, 1.

Mary Magdalene, and Mary (mother) of Joses ; Mark xv, 47.

Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James ; Mark xvi, 1.

Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less, and Joses ; Mark xv, 40.

Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary (mother) of James ; Luke xxiv, 10.

JAMES.

Jude brother of James ; Jude 1.

James son of Alpheus ; Matthew x, 3.

Judas (brother) of James ; Luke vi, 16.

James son of Alpheus ; Mark iii, 18., Luke vi, 15.

James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon, Christ's brethren, and His (Christ's) sisters ; Mark vi, 3.

James the Lord's brother ; Gal. i, 19.

On comparing these statements, there cannot, I think, be any doubt that Mary the mother of Jude, James and Joses, and "The other Mary," constantly associated with Mary Magdalene, are the same, nor that Mary the wife of Cleopas is also. Jude is brother of James, and James is son of Alpheus, alleged to be the same as Cleopas, and James (Jude) and Joses sons of Mary, I suppose wife of Cleopas. Thus the identity and connection of persons is evident. Mary called "The other Mary," the constant companion of Mary Magdalene, was wife of Cleopas and mother of James, Jude, Joses, and Simon, and these were immediate relations of Christ; whether by Cleopas or Mary does not appear. This does not affect the question as to Mary's having a family after the birth of Christ, nor her living with Joseph, of which I think Scripture leaves no doubt. But further, this would determine that James the Lord's brother is the Apostle James the less, because James the Lord's brother is brother of Jude; Mark vi, 3. And James the Apostle is Jude's brother; Luke vi, 16; and son of Alpheus. And, I think, from the place James holds in the Acts, and in the Galatians, it is the same James, and not another. For in Galatians it is "James the Lord's brother," and "Certain came from James"; and in Acts "Tell it to James," and James presides, in a sense, in Acts xv. The absence of all addition in the case of James is the natural proof of his being the well known James.

It would have been quite incongruous to introduce the Lord's Name in an epistle, whereas "Jude (the brother) of James" was the distinctive name he had acquired in contrast with Iscariot; Luke vi, 16.

THE CRY OF CHRIST.

The cry of Christ is of wonderful power and character; 2 Cor. vi, 2. His cry was the perfect expression of His nature, of a Divine apprehension of evil, death, and judgment—the expression in need of all that God was against sin, when that came before His soul, so that He had the consciousness of that need according to the perfection of His judgment of evil, His sense of need as Man under it, and thus in the perfect claim of what He was in Person, and in glorifying God in His work. Hence God's answer must be according to all this, according to the perfection of this claim in the Person of Christ, and hence salvation, our salvation is just this, the necessity of God's answering Christ according to the claim Christ had, and the cry made to Him. He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. What a wonderful salvation! And how it places us in the intimacy of the Father's acceptance of the Son! Hence in Ps. xxii, when heard from the horns of the unicorn, His first thought is: "I will declare Thy Name unto My brethren," and then He praises, in the joy of the answer, and relationship with His Father into which He enters on the answer, "in the midst of the congregation." His God and our God, His Father and our Father, and all the joy He has in coming, with: "Therefore doth my Father love me," added to His everlasting delight, into the renewed light of His Father's countenance, He puts us in and we sing with Him in it. Our salvation is in the perfectness of God's necessary answer to Christ's cry, according to the claim of Christ, and what God must feel about it, and as to it.

THOUGHTS ON HEBREWS.

It is quite evident how the mysterious character of Messiah is brought out in the beginning of Hebrews, with details therefrom afterwards. It connects at the end of its subject no doubt with the Jews, but only at its end as a complementary part bringing in the Millennium. But it is not the Church, but headship over all things with, at best, joint heirs and glory. It is Messiah in His Person, but Messiah glorified. There is a habitable earth to come, but that has been put in subjection to man, and Man takes a heavenly seat and wider sphere. The Son's title, as by inheritance having a more excellent Name, and Creator, I do not enter on here; that is wonderfully brought out in chap. i. But in chap. ii. it is Man. Man was made a little lower than the Angels (these were a separate creation) but the head of all things in the scene he was set in, the scene where all God's ways are displayed, where the Angels learn them, as we read. Nor can there, we may boldly say, be two crosses. Well! man fell, and went down to death, below any creature; for it was its ruin, whereas the lowest was good in its place, and set to be there. And the whole creation under heaven was brought down with him, came down together out of its links and order with God. And, besides, Satan acquired dominion over man, and the creation in general as belonging to him, in death by it. All came down in ruin as a creation, and death the sign of it, and Satan was set up.

Now we see, so is the fact, Jesus made a little lower than the Angels for the suffering of death, coming down to be able to die (though their Creator, and far above them).

And as all things had been put under man in purpose, a purpose not even yet fulfilled, and man had brought down the whole creation into ruin, himself sinking into death, death was the point where the Redeemer as Man must meet the case to redeem, and, not exactly restore, but meet the ruin in its lowest and central point where the head of the first creation had got, and so bring about the purpose of Man's headship to God's glory, such as no mere creature indeed could have done. Hence I judge ὑπὲρ παντὸς (for everything) is "thing" not "man" here. He could not say πάντων (all things) in this sense, for it was not individual cases, if the creation was taken in; nor was it τοῦ παντὸς (of everything) as a whole, but in the most abstract form "everything." It could not have been restored as a whole, without restoring it as it was, and the work went far beyond that. But the case was to be met as to everything, and it was. He went down where man went in bringing in the ruin, suffered death for "everything," looked as the centre of the ruin in its head.

But this brings in another point; there were persons to be saved, sons to be brought to glory—such was in the purpose. And it became Him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things (ruined as they now are) in bringing sons to glory, guilty with, and heirs of him who was the centre of the ruin and guilty in it, in bringing such to glory that He who set Himself as the Head of salvation should, for the majesty of Him for whom and by whom all things are, pass through that which was involved in that majesty in respect of the mediate cause of the ruin, and the responsible cause. For, though He atoned (and that comes afterwards) He associated Himself with them as far as God's

glory and their glorifying was concerned. Sinless, and above all the evil, He took all its consequences on Him in suffering even to death. It became God so to deal with Him, He having taken that place. He was brought to the place of glory He was to have as Son of Man (with those brought to glory as sons too in grace), through the sufferings. The glory of God demanded that He might be there, bringing withal the many sons with Him. "Bringing" (ἀγαγόντα) seems most naturally to ally itself with "the leader" (ἀρχηγὸν) than to stand between "Him" (αὐτῷ) and "make perfect" (τελειῶσαι). It scarcely affects the point I am upon. For Christ and those He sanctified were all of one, were one set, Man, and men brought (by grace) into the same glory with Him; all were "of one," one sort, not a stranger to them, delivering them as He, suppose, might Angels by power if needed, or God any creature, but all one set, all men, and to be glorified together, though One sanctified and the others were sanctified by Him. But they were all one set to be thus His "partakers" (μέτοχοι), for here it goes into the way of their getting to be so, in a time yet to come. The "of one" (ἐξ ἑνὸς) is as abstract as possible. They were in the same nature and condition, when raised to their new place. It is not the state of the nation; for when He said: "My brethren," He was risen (and He never did before) and they were not, but they were all taken to be one with Him, owned as His brethren. Hence, as the children had flesh and blood, He took it. He associates Himself completely with them though, and that He might be in its full effect, He was the Sanctifier, and they the sanctified; comp: John xvii, 17, 19; the result when gone to glory, in 2 Cor. iii.

Now we have had man in purpose over all the works of God's hands—man fallen, and the creation connected with him sunk down, he having gone down to death. We have seen Jesus, "made a little lower than the Angels," taking a man's place that He might die, now crowned with honour and glory. He came down and took this place that He might taste what was the *ultima ratio* of creation-ruin, and its centre's, *i.e*, man's place as taking his place in it, but He was withal bringing many sons to glory. And God, for whom all things are, must bring the Captain of their salvation into His glory and perfect place through sufferings. This was in the necessity of God's glory, seeing He was bringing such to glory. Here it is God's majesty, not atonement. If Christ put Himself at the head of such, He must go through what became the glory of Him to whom in glory He was bringing them, and walk the path through which His taking up their cause led Him, as required by the glory of God. For He did not help them by an outstretched hand from on high, but of one with them. Not that He was subject to it Himself; it was "Takes hold of" (ἐπιλαμβάνεται). He, the Sanctifier, above it all, becomes a Man to enter into it all, that He may be able to enter into it all, and pass through the deep suffering that became God's glory in it. It was no subjection to it, or He could not have done so; but going through sufferings as became God's glory, because He, in the accomplishment of this glorious purpose, He and the coheirs were to be "of one."

Now I get to the effect of His work—a second point. He takes the flesh and blood that through death He might destroy Satan's power, his power might be rendered void,

deliver the individuals who, as of this creation, dreaded this central witness of ruin, and their ruin as belonging to it itself, the end of what they were. Next, He took it so as to know all the sorrows of those He became High Priest for withal, making propitiation for the sins of the people. (Here it reaches over to what is Jewish in its terms). Having made this propitiation, having Himself suffered being tempted, He is able to succour those tempted. All this latter part refers to Jewish thoughts naturally, but does not in effect leave out Gentiles, save the expression, "the sins of the people," more particularly shows the branches reaching over the wall of the heavenly calling to future Jewish hopes. "Thy Name unto my brethren" were literally those who had been with Him in His lifetime, but whom He had not called so till then (John xx. and Ps. xxii.). Yet we come in as sons. "I and the children" again, the Remnant from Isaiah viii. and "I will put my trust in Him" from the same, but in the rejection of Israel as a body, as Ps. xxii, involved their full rejection of Him. Yet in both, the Remnant specifically owned, only Ps. xxii, on atonement and as sons.

In Isaiah viii. as a testimony to both houses of Israel, He waiting when Jehovah hid His face from them, so "The seed of Abraham," yet we are it as in Christ. But the position of Christ is very solemnly, though mysteriously, brought out here, how really He was a Man, and to go through the sufferings which led to glory; holy sufferings, but which it became God to make Him pass through to perfect Him in the place of purpose—and for us now in the place of service. It was connected not only with the sons, though that it was, but as taking a place in connection with those by whom, as regards their place as men, their race, the first creation had been brought into the bondage of corruption and ruin in man's death. This passes then into His association with the sons, or theirs rather with Him, for they were being brought to glory, yet such that He took their nature in order to be able to die, and therewith suffer, and be tempted, and so pass into glory with the sons, they like Him as He had been made like unto them in all things, and taken their cup of sorrow, so as to be a merciful High Priest as well as die for them. It is not only their con-

nection with the Remnant of Israel, that they might be connected with Him in glory, but in reference to God's glory, as He for whom all things were, and, as to death, to take up the creation for the purpose of God in righteousness and power, *i.e.* in redemption, and so under glory, and the sons in the glory. These are the two parts. How the Psalms (iii—viii, showing the two) take up this is evident, only these taking the end of the subject connected with the Jewish Remnant, to begin with, and showing His interest and glory; here taking up His Person, and only bringing them in by the bye as a subsequent collateral event, which had to be made good, yet maintaining the glory of His Person, and mystery of His position all through.

When we get a glimpse of these associations, how it makes us see how little we know, how we have just the ends of some threads, and how it makes one subject to Scripture which came from the mind which knew the whole, and which is a Divine revelation, and a revelation to us! What is of, and becomes God, but which is for and becomes us! Christ as Life was the Light of men. But we see it as parts and glimpses of an immense system, but which in the nature of our knowledge we know only in part. I see a ruined creation, I see an exalted Christ, I see man in death, I see Christ become a Man to taste it "for" (ὑπέρ). I see many sons bringing to glory, and He who created all things, when I look down, not ashamed to call them brethren. He is a Man too, yet He who sanctifies, and they sanctified to be with Him in the glory, so that they were to be all "of one." He is made perfect in this place, and, to this, must pass through sufferings as became God's majesty. What a scene of counsels and ways beyond our thought! Yet the objects of our thoughts as taught of God. There are things "which it is not allowed man to utter." But these are for us when in the body. And I feel more than ever that we must hold fast the truth of Christ's sufferings as an integral part of the truth revealed of what He is, because we are ignorant, and because it is mysterious, and no man knows the Son but the Father. Therefore we must hold very fast what is revealed, for what is revealed is perfect truth for us; though

only knowing it in part, if we leave out, in the way of rejecting any of it, all becomes false, for none then is Divinely co-ordinated for us. And that it is, as we have it, though it be only knowing in part. It is perfect as a communication by the Divine Spirit, not perfect as God knows, nor having anything to do with man's knowledge, but perfect as a communication by the Spirit of God to us for us. So Christ, no one knows Him but the Father, yet He is the perfect revelation of God and the Father, and exactly to man. "The Life was the Light of men," specifically so—a reciprocal proposition. God in His own counsels in glory could not have been that, man would have been incapable of it. Where was mercy, grace, condescension, pardon, righteousness, love to man as shewn in Christ, yea in death? Yet God Himself was perfectly revealed. He that had seen Christ had seen the Father—He had declared God. And so instrumentally with the word. But then I must take it as given to us, through the help of the Holy Spirit.

I do not complain of the translation: "All of one." It is just right, and the effort to make it precise in that form only makes it false, because it is meant to be abstract. It is not "of God" simply, nor "of sinful man." It is when sanctified, they who are, and He who sanctifies all belong to and are one set, as I have said. It is not in the word "who are sanctified" this is—that only declares the class. I speak of the fact. But it is not by being sanctified they are "of one"—for He sanctifies. And to have this complete association, the sanctifying Son of God took their nature. It could not be without that; yet it was not with the unsanctified ones He was ἐξ ἑνὸς (of one). It must be Man to say "of one," yet men as men were not "of one" with Him. It is the fact when He can call them "brethren," "children"; when He was a Man, and they were by grace associated with Him, He being a Man, they were all "of one."

The question is: "What is Man?" Then comes purpose, and they are brought and associated with Him in the place of purpose, *i.e.* all men who are brought into this place. He could treat them as such as soon as He was risen, and they were so though in the earthly vessel. Nay, in a certain sense, He could when He was on earth though

prospectively, but He was revealing the matter to them, and the Name in which they were afterwards to stand, but it was the heirs of glory He took up to be "of one" with Him; and "of one" is as true now He is in glory as ever, only all is not fully accomplished in the "sanctified." But the "of one" is of infinite value and blessing. But it makes me reject more earnestly than ever His being by birth in the distance they were. It destroys the whole idea, though, without being born as Man, He could not have taken this place, as we have seen.

Note further, they are thus at once, consequently, viewed as "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," for they were sons, brethren bringing to glory. It is not the Church this; that sits in Him, and is His Body, or the habitation of God by the Spirit, but the sons bringing to glory with Him who is crowned with glory. But note verses 6—13 lay the foundation; the application to our state is a practical consequence, for the suffering heirs down here (and so is the order in i, ii. 1—4) and this while owning the place of heirs in iii. 1. is what is pursued as the subject of the Book. They are in the wilderness, on the road. The priesthood (referring to heaven) begins chap. iv, 14; chap. v, 5 is the character of glory which fitted Him (γενηθῆναι) as regards God (verse 6, office) verse 7 is what fits humanly for us; verse 8, referring to verse 5, and shewing the character of the sufferings, contradictory of the personal individual place as born in this world, His own relationship. Yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered, and was heard as fearing in holy feeling in the suffering, and crying for Himself, and so was made perfect in His place, for a High Priest became us who was higher than the heavens. The calling is carried all through, but the doctrine is for our actual state, and the brethren, sons bringing to glory, are connected with the super-heavenly place. We are associated with Him there, separate from Him here. A Priest separate from sinners was needed, for we were called out from among them; higher than the heavens, because we have, ourselves, to say to God there, as associated with Him.

The first thought is man as such—that being that God

had already created. "Lord, what is man?" If Christ therefore undertook this counsel of God, He must take up this being. Yet the purpose was, in itself, before the world, and before the fall, the state "One made a little lower than the Angels." And, further, Christ, as Son, had a title over all that He had created. All things were created by Him and for Him, but the counsel was to give this dominion to Man. It was to be held by Man, but in this counsel He was going to associate joint-heirs. The first man had been placed over this world in creation, and in the image of God, responsible; and that was not to result in nothing, but indeed in an immense moral development of good and evil, and of grace in redemption. "What is man?" is man abstractedly, but man considered as already made, and made with certain views on God's part. All these elements come into Christ's work here. He was to be Heir in His own title. It was to be in glory and over all He created. It was to be as Man, and though in the Son yet man whom God had created taken up; not in a simply new race which left the old one wholly and simply out of the question. But man was in sin, and that could not be in glory. It must be One whose holiness was inseparable from Himself, One the Object of God's delight, yet to walk in man's place perfectly (learning obedience) and to have no present rejection which should shut Him out (which could not be, seeing He was the Son, yet keeping His commandments, and so abiding in His love) and yet take up the whole case of man, and suffer so as to make good God's glory in that place, never withal losing His place of Son in favour (Atonement, when made sin, and as made sin only excepted) yet never so glorifying God, and in fact so accepted as there: "Therefore doth my Father love me."

But as Man, and not yet in atonement, He took up the seed of Abraham, the heirs of promise, and it became God to bring Him into the place of glory and perfection through sufferings. For He was really Man, and because, though in a new estate, He puts man into the glory, Object of God's counsels Himself, a Second Adam, but taking up the heirs in the first race, we get this great and wondrous truth: "The Sanctifier and the sanctified are all

of one." And therefore He took flesh and blood, because the children God had given Him had it, to die, intercede, associate them with Himself, but in the condition which He was to take as Man in the glory, but to take according to the purpose of God in man. Hence, to have, as Man, man with Him in it, "All of one," He, the Sanctifier Son ran all through it. The Son was Creator, chap. i; He was Son born in this world, "That Holy Thing," having flesh and blood, Son all through, and revealing the Father's Name to those He had given Him. Yet it was through redemption, in which He was alone, He could bring them in, propitiation made, His own perfect work to glorify God, putting away their sins (and to put away sin). Then He treats them as sons in His own place (John xx.) and Sonship took its place in glory as Man, and we—wondrous, unspeakable grace!—with Him. For without this, the Corn of wheat would have remained alone, whatever its personal glory and title, even by obedience. This makes all the second and fifth chapters plain, and so full of deep and heart-reaching instruction. He suffered being tempted. He learned obedience, was made perfect, *i.e.* as to His place in glory (ever perfect, though exercised and in exercises) made perfect through sufferings. Oh! it is a blessed thought.

A few more words on Chap. ii. The thing first contemplated is the habitable earth to come being subject to men, as taking the place of Angels. That is the first thought. This He founds on Ps. viii, involving, in the purpose of the Spirit, universal supremacy, but as made a little lower than the Angels. This He connects with the Person of Christ made so for the suffering of death, so that Man glorified in power is thought of, and then this is brought down, by the Incarnation for the purpose of death, to Christ entering into the place needed, not only to bring them out of it, but for their complete association in glory finally, but by a more true and complete association that He was a real Man and, entering into their sorrows and place, though perfect in it, suffered for God's glory in it—and in such sort took the place, bringing us into the same with Him as Man and men, that we are all "of one." It is man

in contrast with Angels, but Christ the Key to the place they are in. But how truly and blessedly "of one" is true, without any new doctrine, is every moment more plain and more real to my soul. The Lord and we are all men, but we men partakers of the Divine nature, and in that state "of one"; only He the Sanctifier, and we the sanctified. So He owns us as brethren, and it is in manhood that He is said to be, and the sanctified "of one." It is neither Godhead nor manhood which is the "one" (ἑν). But He became a Man that we might be all "of one"—hence, go through what stood on that path, for the glory of God.

In Chap. ii. we get three motives for the sufferings of Christ, taken as a whole. It became Him, the glory of God, seeing whose cause He had undertaken; His association in grace with the sons He was bringing to glory—to sympathise and deliver; thirdly, making reconciliation. The first, verse 10; the second, 11—15; the third, 15—18. But the three are closely interwoven.

NOTE.—Not only is it impossible that God could do anything that sin may abound, but, in Rom. v, 21, if He had said where the offence abounded grace did also abound, it would have confined it to those under the Law. But He was showing the contrary—that Christ's work reached out beyond, to Adam's in aspect and efficacy. Grace overrode the whole, though it might be rejected.

THE BOOK OF ENOCH.

NOTE THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES:

Chap. xxxvii, 2. "When righteousness shall be manifested in the presence of the righteous themselves, who will be elected for their good works duly weighed by the Lord of spirits; and when the light of the righteous and the elect, who dwell on earth, shall be manifested; where will the habitation of sinners be, and where the place of rest for those who have rejected the Lord of spirits? It would have been better for them, had they been never born." Note this last sentence.

Chap. xlvii, 3. "At that time I beheld the Ancient of days, while He sat upon the throne of his glory, while the book of the living was opened in his presence, and while all the powers which were above the heavens stood around and before him."

Chap. xlviii, 3. "And He" (the Son of Man) "shall be the light of nations."

—5. "Therefore the elect and the concealed one existed in His presence, before the world was created."

—6. "And has revealed to the saints and to the righteous the wisdom of the Lord of spirits."

—10. "But in the day of their trouble the world shall obtain tranquillity."

Chap. l, 1. "In those days shall the earth deliver up from her womb, and hell deliver up from hers, that which it has received; and destruction shall restore that which it owes."

Chap. lxi, 4. "The word of His mouth shall destroy

Third edition, revised and enlarged, by Richard Laurence, LL.D., Archbishop of Cashel, Oxford, 1838.

all the sinners and all the ungodly, who shall perish at His presence." Query, of "the Elect one," or "Lord of spirits."

—7. "Trouble shall come upon them, as upon a woman in travail." . . . . —10. . . . . "For from the beginning the Son of Man existed in secret, whom the Most High preserved in the presence of His power, and revealed to the elect."

Chap. lxii, 15. . . . . "Before the Son of Man from whose presence they shall be expelled."

It is curious in chap. lxiv, 1, it is said: "Noah saw that the earth became inclined," which brought on the deluge.

Chap. lxxxviii, 102. "Then I grieved extremely on account of the tower, and because the house of the sheep was overthrown."

—103. "Neither was I afterwards able to perceive whether they again entered that house."

Note, this is after having said (verse 92): "I saw, too, that he forsook the house of their fathers, and their tower; giving them all into the power of lions to tear and devour them; into the power of every beast." And then he calls (verse 94) "seventy shepherds" accountable. So that the destruction of verse 103 was under or after the seventy, which itself seems after the Babylonish destruction of the temple.

—110. "After this, I saw shepherds overlooking for twelve hours." This seems a new vision. He goes back in the same manner, chap. lxxxix, to the kings, according to Dr. Laurence himself; he says in footnote "The kings of Babylon, etc., during and after the captivity."

Next, as regards the twelve shepherds of chap. lxxxix, I see not how more than twelve are necessarily made out before Christianity. He says: "The first of these was Mattathias, the father of Judas Maccabæus. . . . After him came in succession Judas Maccabæus, Jonathan, Simon, John Hyrcanus, Aristobulus, Alexander Jannæus, Alexandra his widow, Aristobulus, Hyrcanus, Antigonus and Herod." Mattathias is doubtful, Alexandra a woman, would not be counted. It would be then connected with Jerusalem, say, Judas Maccabæus, Jonathan, Simon, John Hyrcanus, Aristobulus, Alexander Jannæus, Hyrcanus, Antigonus, Herod, Archelaus, and, if we go on to the

latter part of Herod, Agrippa when he had Judæa added. We are already, he admits, in fully Christian times. They go up to Herod, under whom Christ was born.

Chap. xcii, 11. "During its completion also the house of dominion shall be burnt with fire, and all the race of the elect root shall be dispersed." That is in the sixth week, the Babylonish captivity.

—12. "In the seventh week, a perverse generation." "During its completion, the righteous, selected from the plant of everlasting righteousness shall be rewarded; and to them shall be given sevenfold instruction respecting every part of his creation." Weeks 8, 9, 10 are all in the vague of ignorance. But we have in the 700 years of the 7th the arrival of Christianity. Of this epoch he speaks with a promise, note, of deliverance: "The righteous . . . . shall be rewarded," though a perverse generation had been found in it, the "selected from the plant of righteousness" would be rewarded, *i.e.*, he brings up the hopes of a Jewish deliverance at that time, and then runs off into prophecies which require no attention.

On verse 4 of this chapter, "I have been born the seventh in the first week," Dr. Laurence says: "In the mode of reckoning here adopted, it is evident that a day stands for a hundred years; so that consequently a week is made to express a period of seven hundred years." And he adds: "The seventh week closed with the second century of the Christian era."

Note, Dr. Laurence gives, and pretends to give, no proof of a date earlier than Jude, but that Jude quotes it, which is the point in question; he takes this as sufficient and conclusive. Now, I do not admit that it is a quotation from Enoch, as far as we can judge from this translation. These are its words: Chap. ii. "Behold he comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon them and destroy the wicked, and reprove all the carnal for everything which the sinful and ungodly have done, and committed against him." This is rather foist in, I should say. These are the Apostle Jude's words from the Authorised Version: "The Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints," (holy myriads) "to execute

judgment upon all; and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard (speeches) which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

Now, I should decidedly say that this is not a quotation. The two passages have the appearance of referring to the same prophecy, but the Apostle Jude's is far more precise, has far more the character of giving the prophecy as it was. He has far more the stamp of a real and original passage of prophecy. But it cannot be admitted to be a quotation, the differences are far too great. It is not merely citing the sense, for it is far more exactly and elaborately worded. Lücke speaks of it seeming to be the work of a Jewish Christian. He says: "But how much soever the whole makes one disposed to consider the book as the production of a Jewish Christian, I nevertheless hesitate to pronounce any fixed opinion, before the original form of the book is better known, than has been hitherto possible." Laurence says this means interpolation, but he speaks of the character of the author, not of interpolation.

We have seen he brings up his history to the Christian period. Allusions to the Old Testament, particularly Daniel, are constantly found; some, I have noted, seem to me to be such to the New. I should hardly however think him a Christian, but a Jew of that period who had known something of what was current among them by hearsay or reading.

He ministers greatly to the worship of Angels, speaks of Son of Man, Son of woman (chap. lxi) and of saints as mediators, intruding into things which he has not seen. Nothing properly Christian is mentioned, nor the law either.

He calls Messiah "the Elect One," as Clement of Rome, and makes Him exist concealed before creation, and Son of Man. He would lead the Jews to hopes of deliverance about the time of Christianity.

The fall of the Angels is largely gone into by their connection with women. Astronomy, as to Sun, Moon, and stars, as to which he is very proud, and of course very ignorant. He was, as Laurence observes, in a higher latitude than Jerusalem (his longest day is sixteen hours)

and, I think, he speaks in one place of it as "the south." This would lead to suppose he had little knowledge of Christianity, if about the time of its promulgation in Judæa. It is impossible to have a greater contrast than between Jude and this stupid book.

He was pretty well acquainted with the Old Testament, many passages being referred to. I judge he would lead to the hope of a Jewish deliverance, but was more concerned to shew off the fruit of his imagination. His anxiety to display his notions of astronomy is ludicrous, save the pretension to Divinely imparted knowledge.

Remark how the Holy Ghost completely answers in us to the privileges and glories of Ephes. i; how He makes them good down here. First, answering to verse 4, the power of holiness is His very character, and the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by Him given to us. He is the Spirit of Sonship, so that we cry: "Abba, Father." He is the earnest of the inheritance, and the transforming Revealer of the glory. Even as to the body of Christ, we are baptized by Him into One Body, united to Christ, One Spirit. It shews us greatly how the Holy Ghost, as the Paraclete (Comforter) fills up now in power the whole scope of God's counsels in which we have part.

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